

## Canons of the First Ecumenical Council

The First Ecumenical Council was held in Nicea, Asia Minor, in 325 on the occasion of the heresy of Arius (Arianism). In order to expedite the assembling of the Council, the emperor Constantine placed at the disposal of the bishops the public conveyances and posts of the empire; moreover, while the Council lasted he provided abundantly for the maintenance of the members. The choice of Nicea was favourable to the assembling of a large number of bishops. It was easily accessible to the bishops of nearly all the provinces, but especially to those of Asia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Greece, and Thrace. The sessions were held in the principal church, and in the central hall of the imperial palace. A large place was indeed necessary to receive such an assembly, though the exact number is not known with certainty. St. Athanasius, a member of the council speaks of 300, and in his letter "Ad Afros" he says explicitly 318. This figure is almost universally adopted. Most of the bishops present were Greeks; among the Latins we know only Hosius of Cordova, Cecilian of Carthage, Mark of Calabria, Nicasius of Dijon, Donnus of Stridon in Pannonia, and the two Roman priests, Victor and Vincentius, representing the pope. The assembly numbered among its most famous members St. Alexander of Alexandria, Eustathius of Antioch, Macarius of Jerusalem, Eusebius of Nicomedia, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Nicholas of Myra. Some had suffered during the last persecution; others were poorly enough acquainted with Christian theology. Among the members was a young deacon, Athanasius of Alexandria, for whom this Council was to be the prelude to a life of conflict and of glory.

The Council was opened by Constantine with the greatest solemnity. The emperor began by making the bishops understand that they had a greater and better business in hand than personal quarrels and interminable recriminations. Nevertheless, he had to submit to the infliction of hearing the last words of debates which had been going on previous to his arrival. Eusebius of Caesarea and his two abbreviators, Socrates and Sozomen, as well as Rufinus and Gelasius of Cyzicus, report no details of the theological discussions. Rufinus tells us only that daily sessions were held and that Arius was often summoned before the assembly; his opinions were seriously discussed and the opposing arguments attentively considered. The majority, especially those who were confessors of the Faith, energetically declared themselves against the impious doctrines of Arius. St. Athanasius assures us that the activities of the Council were nowise hampered by Constantine's presence. To St. Athanasius may be attributed a preponderant influence in the formulation of the symbol of the First Ecumenical Council, of which the following is a literal translation:

We believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance [ek tes ousias] of the Father, God of God, light of light, true God of true God, begotten not made, of the same substance with the Father [homoousion to patri], through whom all things were made both in heaven and on earth; who for us men and our salvation descended, was incarnate, and was made man, suffered and rose again the third day, ascended into heaven and cometh to judge the living and the dead. And in the Holy Ghost. Those who say: There was a time when He was not, and He was not before He was begotten; and that He was made out of nothing (ex ouk onton); or who maintain that He is of another hypostasis or another substance [than the Father], or that the Son of God is created, or mutable, or subject to change, [them] the Catholic Church anathematizes.

The adhesion was general and enthusiastic. All the bishops save five declared themselves ready to subscribe to this formula, convince that it contained the ancient faith of the Apostolic Church. The opponents were soon reduced to two, Theonas of Marmarica and Secundus of Ptolemais, who were exiled and anathematized. Arius and his writings were also branded with anathema, his books were cast into the fire, and he was exiled to Illyria.

Other matters dealt with by this council were the controversy as to the time of celebrating Easter and the Meletian schism.

Of all the Acts of this Council, which, it has been maintained, were numerous, only three fragments have reached us: the creed, or symbol, given above; the canons; the synodal decree. In reality there never were any official acts besides these. But the accounts of Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and Rufinus may be considered as very important sources of historical information, as well as some data preserved by St. Athanasius, and a history of the Council of Nicea written in Greek in the fifth century by Gelasius of Cyzicus. There has long existed a dispute as to the number of the canons of First Nicea. All the collections of canons, whether in Latin or Greek, composed in the fourth and fifth centuries agree in attributing to this Council only the twenty canons, which we possess today. Of these the following is a brief résumé:

Canon 1: On the admission, or support, or expulsion of clerics mutilated by choice or by violence.

Canon 2: Rules to be observed for ordination, the avoidance of undue haste, the deposition of those guilty of a grave fault.

Canon 3: All members of the clergy are forbidden to dwell with any woman, except a mother, sister, or aunt.

Canon 4: Concerning episcopal elections.

Canon 5: Concerning the excommunicate.

Canon 6: Concerning patriarchs and their jurisdiction.

Canon 7: confirms the right of the bishops of Jerusalem to enjoy certain honours.

Canon 8: concerns the Novatians.

Canon 9: Certain sins known after ordination involve invalidation.

Canon 10: Lapsi who have been ordained knowingly or surreptitiously must be excluded as soon as their irregularity is known.

Canon 11: Penance to be imposed on apostates of the persecution of Licinius.

Canon 12: Penance to be imposed on those who upheld Licinius in his war on the Christians.

Canon 13: Indulgence to be granted to excommunicated persons in danger of death.

Canon 14: Penance to be imposed on catechumens who had weakened under persecution.

Canon 15: Bishops, priests, and deacons are not to pass from one church to another.

Canon 16: All clerics are forbidden to leave their church. Formal prohibition for bishops to ordain for their diocese a cleric belonging to another diocese.

Canon 17: Clerics are forbidden to lend at interest.

Canon 18: recalls to deacons their subordinate position with regard to priests.

Canon 19: Rules to be observed with regard to adherents of Paul of Samosata who wished to return to the Church.

Canon 20: On Sundays and during the Paschal season prayers should be said standing.

## 1

If anyone has been operated upon by surgeons for a disease, or has been excised by barbarians, let him remain in the clergy. But if anyone has excised himself when well, he must be dismissed even if he is examined after being in the clergy. And henceforth no such person must be promoted to holy orders. But as is self-evident, though such is the case as regards those who affect the matter and dare to excise themselves, if any persons have been eunuchized by barbarians or their lords, but are otherwise found to be worthy, the Canon admits such persons to the clergy.

(Ap. cc. XXI, XXII, XXIII; c. VIII of the 1st-&-2nd.)

### Interpretation

Various Canons of the Apostles include decrees concerning eunuchism. But since they were disregarded, as it would appear, on this account it became necessary that it be made the subject of the present Canon, which says: Whoever has been made a eunuch by surgeons because of a disease or ailment, or by barbarians during the time of an invasion, if he is a clergyman, let him perform the functions of the clergy. But whoever while in good health has made himself a eunuch, even though he is a clergyman, must cease from the activities of the clergy. And of as many such persons as are laymen not even one must henceforth be made a clergyman. But as we say this in regard to those who affectedly and wilfully dare to make themselves eunuchs, in the same vein again we say that if there be any persons that have been made eunuchs by barbarians or by their masters (or owners), that is to say, against their will and tyrannically, but that are worthy, the Canon (either the present Canon, that is to say, or Apostolical Canon XXI) allows them to be admitted to the clergy. Read also the Interpretation of Ap. c. XXI.

## 2

Inasmuch as many things, whether of necessity or otherwise urgently demanded by men, have been done contrary to the ecclesiastical Canon, so that men who have but recently come to the faith from a heathen life, and have been catechized for only a short time, have been conducted directly to the spiritual bath, and as soon as baptized have been given an episcopate or a presbytery, it has seemed well henceforth to have no such thing occur. For the catechumen needs more time and a longer trial after baptism. The Apostolical letter, too, is plain which says, "not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the Devil's snare" (1 Tim. 3:6). If, on the other hand, in the course of time any psychical (i.e., animal) sin be found against the person, and it is exposed by two or three witnesses, let such a person be dismissed from the clergy. As for anyone acting contrary hereto, as having the hardihood to do things opposed to the great council, he himself shall be in danger of losing his standing in the clergy.

(Ap. c. LXXX; c. XVII of the 1st-&-2nd; c. X of Sardican; c. III of Laodicea; c. IV of Cyril.)

### Interpretation

The present Canon commands what Ap. c. LXXX ordains. For it says: Since in times past many things have occurred that were contrary to the ecclesiastical Canon (that is to say, Ap. c. LXXX), whether of necessity, or on account of persons motivated by other considerations, so that they have almost immediately baptized persons that before had been converted to the Orthodox faith from the life of a heathen and infidel only a short while before, and had been catechized only a short time in the mystery of piety (i.e., of the Christian religion), and right after baptism they promoted them to an episcopate or a presbytery, which is to say, they ordained them presbyters or bishops; since, I say, these things formerly used to be done thus illegally, it has appeared reasonable that from now on they should not be done. For a catechumen needs sufficient time[1] even before being baptized to be properly catechized and instructed concerning all the dogmas of the faith; and after being baptized he again needs to undergo a long trial as a test of his worthiness. For the Apostle says to Timothy: "Let not a novice (be ordained, that is to say), or one newly catechized and recently planted in the vineyard of Christ, lest, after being puffed up with pride, he fall into the same sin and into the same snare as the Devil fell into, or, in other words, into pride. If, on the other hand, with the passage of time, in the subsequent interval of trial and after he has been catechized and baptized and ordained, it should happen that he is found to have committed any animal (i.e., soul-wrought) sin[2] and is convicted thereof by two or three witnesses, he shall cease officiating in holy orders. As for anyone that does otherwise, he shall be in danger of forfeiting his claim to holy orders, that is to say, he shall be deposed from office, on the ground that he has impudently defied the great council. See also the Interpretation of Ap. c. LXXX.

The great Council has forbidden generally any Bishop or Presbyter or Deacon, and anyone else at all among those in the clergy, the privilege of having a subintroducta. Unless she is either a mother, or a sister, or an aunt, or a person above suspicion.

(c. V of the 6th; c. XXIII of the 7th; c. XIX of Ancyra; C. XIX of Carthage; c. LXXXVIII of Basil.)

#### **Interpretation[3]**

Men in holy orders and clergymen ought not to cause the laity any suspicion or scandal. On this account the present Canon ordains that this great Council — the First Ecumenical, that is to say — has entirely forbidden any bishop or presbyter or deacon or any other clergyman to have a strange woman in his house, and to live with her, excepting only a mother, or a sister, or an aunt, or other persons that do not arouse any suspicion.

The ordinance of the first title of the Novels, which is Justinian Novel 123, says as follows: “We too forbid, in accordance with the power of the divine Canons presbyters and deacons and subdeacons and all other clergymen that have no lawful wife to keep any strange woman in their house. Except that they may keep a mother, a daughter, and a sister, and any other persons that are exempt from suspicion. If, however, anyone fails to observe these rules, but, even after reminded by the prelate or by his fellow clergymen, he refuses to throw the woman out whom he has been keeping, or, after being accused, he is proved to be associating with her indecently, such a man shall be deposed,[4] and shall be turned over to the civil authorities of that city where he is serving as a clergyman.” But if a bishop lives with a woman at all, he shall be deposed. Note two things here, though: one, that those who have unsuspicious persons in their home, as we have said, namely, a mother, or a sister, or an aunt, or other, must not at the same time have also suspicious persons serving, not them, but those unsuspicious persons; because again in this manner they become violators and incur the penalties prescribed by the Canons. Instead, they ought either to serve themselves, or have servants to serve them who are unsuspicious. Another thing is that monks ought not to live with unsuspicious persons alone when they have such. Because if the above-mentioned c. XXII of the 7th prohibits one from eating with his female relatives only, who are unsuspicious, how much more does it not prohibit them from living with them? For Basil the Great says (in his discussion of virginity) that the pleasure of flesh has overcome even brothers and sisters born of the same mother and has led to every sort of sin against mothers and daughters, just as it stigmatized also Amnon, the son of David, as a result of his debauching his own sister Tamar (II Sam. ch. 13), because the seductive and magnetic power of sexual love of men for women, which has been placed in men’s bodies, in defiance, he says, of every right reasoning — such as, let us say, that she is a mother, or a sister, or an aunt — spontaneously and all on their own initiative prompts the mingling of bodies of men with bodies of women, regardless of whether they are strangers or relatives, and in spite of the fact that their inward thoughts struggling against it are averse thereto.

It is most fitting that a Bishop should be installed by all those in his province. But if such a thing is difficult either because of the urgency of circumstances, or because of the distance to be travelled, at least three should meet together somewhere and by their votes combined with those of the ones absent and joining in the election by letter they should carry out the ordination thereafter. But as for the ratification of the proceedings, let it be entrusted in each province to the Metropolitan.

(Ap. c. I; c. III of the 7th; c. XIX of Antioch; c. VI of Sardican; c. XII of Laodicea; and cc. XII, LVIII, LIX of Carthage.)

#### **Interpretation**

The present Canon decrees that a bishop ought to be ordained by all the bishops in the province whenever this is feasible; but in case it is difficult for all of them to be gathered together at a meeting for this purpose, whether on account of some urgent necessity, or because of the long distance of travel involved, let at least three bishops meet together in any event, and let those absent contribute their votes by letter in the ordination, and then let them ordain him. As for the validity and ratification of everything that has been done — that is to say, the validity of the election held by all the bishops, and the appointment of the one of the three candidates — because three must be voted for, according to ecclesiastical formality — the appointment, I say, of the one to receive notification of the ordination, must be left and referred to the metropolitan of each province as the supreme authority.[5] But inasmuch as the annotators, namely, Zonaras and Balsamon, explain the text as meaning to be appointed, instead of meaning to be voted for; and others say that instead of ordination we ought to know that previous thereto and properly necessary thereto the election signifies installation. Accordingly, I prefer the word install to the word make. So even here the expression “it is fitting that he should be installed” as previously necessary is a comprehensive term denoting that he should be elected, chosen, ordained by all of them. I said “previously” and

“comprehensive” because this order of procedure is sacred: that is to say, one must first be voted for and afterwards be ordained. Accordingly, we thus obtain a most complete understanding that he has been installed; that is to say, that he has actually been made a bishop. There hence appear to be two significations inherent in the words of the expression “to be installed,” just as there are also in the words of the expression “to be elected”: one implying action by all, and the other implying action by three, both in accordance with the present Canon and in accordance with Ap. c. I. This is about the same as the explanation given by the Seventh Ecum. C. in its own c. III: therefore when only three carry out the ordination, it must previously have been voted for by all of them, those absent signifying their choice by letter.

## 5

As regards those who have been denied communion, whether they be members of the clergy or belong to a lay order, by the bishops in each particular province, let the opinion prevail which expressed in the Canon prescribing that those rejected by some are not to be received by others. But let an investigation be made as to whether or not they have been unchurched on account of small-mindedness or quarrelsomeness or any other such disgustfulness of the Bishop. In order, therefore, that a proper investigation may be made, it has seemed well that synods be held every year twice a year in each province and in a common discussion held by all the Bishops of the province assembled together for this purpose let such questions be thrashed out. And thus those who have admittedly clashed with the Bishop would seem to be reasonably excluded from communion until such time as by common consent of the bishops it may seem better to let a more philanthropic vote be given in their behalf. As for these synods, let one of them be held before Lent, in order that, with the elimination of all small-mindedness, the gift may be offered to God in all its purity; and let the second one be held sometime in autumn.

(Ap. cc. XII, XIII, XXXII, XXXVII; c. XIX of the 4th; c. VIII of the 6th; cc. VI, XX of Antioch; cc. X, XX of Sardican; cc. XXVI, XXXVII, CIV, CXVI, and CXLI of Carthage.)

### Interpretation

The present Canon decrees the following things: In regard to clergymen and laymen who have been excommunicated by the bishops of any particular province, let the opinion prevail and remain in force and effect which has already been expressed in legislation, just as that old Canon (i.e., Ap. c. XXXII or even XII) decrees, to wit, that persons excommunicated by the bishops of one province must not be admitted to communion by other bishops. Yet let an investigation be made as to the possibility that the ones excommunicated have been excommunicated because of some small-mindedness or quarrelsomeness or some other grudge on the part of the bishop. Hence, in order that this matter and other such questions may be properly investigated, it has appeared reasonable to hold local synods twice a year in each province, and to assemble all the bishops together in a common meeting for the express purpose of considering them. And thus, after such an investigation has been made, as touching those who have been sinning against the bishop and who have been rightly and justly excommunicated, by him, let them remain excommunicated, in accordance with grounds of congruity and justice, also by all the rest of the bishops, until it appear reasonable to the common assembly of the bishops to render a more philanthropic (or more humane) decision regarding those who have been excommunicated. For if the one who excommunicated them, let us assume, is so hardened even after some time as to refuse to liberate them from the excommunication, or if he should die in the meantime, permission is given to the synod to release them from it after it deems that a sufficient length of time has been passed in penance. These synods are to be held one sometime before Lent, in order to take advantage of the fact that at this time every small-mindedness and mistake that either the prelate has made in dealing with the clergy and the laity, or, conversely, that the clergy and the laity have shown towards the prelate, is dissolved, in order to allow a pure and unblemished gift of fasting to be offered to God. Let the second synod be held in the time of autumn. Read also Ap. cc. XXXII and XXXVII.

## 6

Let the ancient customs prevail which were in vogue in Egypt and Libya and Pentapolis, to allow the bishop of Alexandria to have authority over all these parts, since this is also the treatment usually accorded to the bishop of Rome. Likewise with reference to Antioch, and in other provinces, let the seniority be preserved to the Churches. In general it is obvious that in the case in which anyone has been made a bishop without the Metropolitan's approval, the great Council has prescribed that such a person must not be a Bishop. If, however, to the common vote of all, though reasonable and in accordance with an ecclesiastical Canon, two or three men object on account of a private quarrel, let the vote of the majority prevail.

(Ap. c. XXXIV; cc. II of the 2nd; c. VIII of the 3rd; c. XXVIII of the 4th; c. XXXVI of the 6th; c. XIX of Laodicea; c. XIII of Carthage.)

### **Interpretation[6]**

The present Canon ordains that the old customs of the three Patriarchs are to be kept in vogue, chiefly and mainly as regarding the Patriarch of Alexandria, and secondly as regarding the Patriarch of Antioch, and the Patriarch of Rome, succinctly and comprehensively. (Concerning the Patriarch of Jerusalem the present Council devote special and separate treatment in its c. VII; and concerning the Patriarch of Constantinople the Second Council set forth its views in its c. III). So that the Patriarch (whom it calls a Bishop here, owing to the fact that it had not yet become customary to designate one by calling him the Patriarch[7]) of Alexandria came to have authority over all the bishops and metropolitans in Egypt and Libya and Pentapolis. In fact, the same custom also came to prevail with regard to the Patriarch of Rome[8] in that he was allowed to have authority and presidency over all the occidental bishops and metropolitans. Likewise the Patriarch of Antioch is given authority over the bishops and metropolitans of Syria, of Middle Syria, of each of the two regions called Cilicia, of Mesopotamia, and of all the other dioceses subject to his jurisdiction. The present Canon, in fact, commands that not only the privileges of these Patriarchs are to be preserved, but even the privileges of other provinces and churches that are subject to the metropolitans. What is said of the Patriarchs in existence is also true of the independent Patriarchs, then and now — that is to say, the autocephalous Patriarchs, such as those of Asia, of Pontus, of Thrace, of Cyprus, of Africa, and of other countries. (Though others say that the Canon names here also other provinces, embraced, concisely speaking, in the dioceses subordinate to the other two Patriarchs, of Constantinople and of Jerusalem; and that of metropolitans it names only patriarchs. But the first interpretation is better; see also Dositheus, in the Dodecabiblus, pp. 117, 123.) Thus the effect of this Canon is that nothing relating to the administration of church affairs can be done without their consent and approval or sanction. Now, inasmuch as the greatest and chiefest of all ecclesiastical affairs is ordination, the Canon accordingly adds that if anyone is made a bishop without the approval of his own metropolitan, as this great Council has decreed, he is not to be a bishop, because in spite of the fact that the multitude of bishops voted for the bishop, the ratification of the election had to be made by the Metropolitan, and whoever was approved by the Metropolitan had to be made a bishop (and see the footnote to the present Council's c. IV). Yet if all the bishops in common elect a candidate to an episcopate in accordance with ecclesiastical Canons, but two or three object to his election, not for a good reason and justly, but cavilously and spitefully, the vote of the majority shall decide the matter.[9] Canon XIX of Antioch decrees the same thing. Canon XIII of Carthage says that if any one of those who took part in the voting and signed should afterwards oppose his own confession and signature, he shall deprive himself of the honor of (being) a bishop. Read also the Interpretation of Ap. c. XXXIV.

### **7**

Inasmuch as a custom has prevailed, and an ancient tradition, for the Bishop in Aelia to be honored, let him have the sequence of honor, with the Metropolitan having his own dignity preserved.

(Ap. c. XXXIV; cc. II, III of the 2nd; c. VIII of the 3rd; c. XXVIII of the 4th; c. XXXVI of the 6th; and c. XIX of Antioch.)

### **Interpretation**

The present Canon is susceptible of two different interpretations. For Balsamon and the Anonymous annotator of the Canons, with whom some Papists (i.e., Roman Catholics, as they are called in common parlance) and Calvinists agree, have interpreted it to mean that inasmuch as an ancient tradition and custom has prevailed for the Bishop of Aelia (i.e., of Jerusalem)[10] to be specially honored on account of the fact that the Lord became incarnate and suffered therein, and the salvatory declaration came forth therefrom through the sacred Apostles into all the world, let him have the honor next after the preceding one, even in subsequent times, yet only honor without any authority and office, because the authority and office ought to be preserved to the Metropolitan of Palestine whose seat was the metropolis called Caesarea[11] of Straton, to whom, as they say, Jerusalem was subject. That is to say, just as c. XII of Chalcedon prescribes that in the case of as many cities as received by virtue of imperial letters the honor of being entitled to the name metropolis, the bishops thereof were the only ones allowed to enjoy the honor, whereas the rights proper thereto were to be preserved to the real metropolis, in the same way as Marcianus (an emperor of the Eastern Empire) honored Chalcedon, and Valentinian (another emperor) honored Nicaea, according to Act 13 of the Council. But Zonaras and others would have it that just as the preceding Canon accorded seniority to the bishops of Alexandria and of Antioch, or rather to say renewed it, as an innovation (for the seniority of Rome was not renewed, because, as we have said, it had been left intact and unchanged), so and in like manner the present Canon bestowed a special honor on Jerusalem. This is tantamount to saying that just as that Canon sanctioned their being granted not only patriarchal privileges and honors, but also the order of precedence of such honors, in that the bishop of Rome came first, the bishop of Alexandria second, the bishop of Antioch third, so did this Canon sanction the granting to Jerusalem not only of patriarchal privileges and honors but also the order of precedence of such honors. On this account it did not say, let him have (special) honor, but “let him have the sequence of honor.” That is the same as saying, let him have fourth place in the sequence of honor after the other three. The expression “with the Metropolis having its own

dignity preserved” denotes that this patriarchal honor is not one attaching to the person and individual (concerning which see the second footnote to c. VI of the present Council), but is consecrated to the metropolis of Jerusalem, so as to provide for its devolving to all the bishops successively acceding to the throne, and not to this or that person alone. Witnesses to the fact that Jerusalem was a metropolis are both Josephus, who says, in his book VII on the Jews, that it was a large city and the metropolis of the entire country of the Jews; and Philo, who says that it was the metropolis, not of a single land of Judea, but also of a plurality of lands. For the Apostolic throne of Jerusalem not only stands first in nearly the whole world, but also enjoyed patriarchal privileges from the beginning, and still enjoys them even today. First, because it had provinces subject to it, and a diocese which belonged to the Patriarch. Hence it was that the neighboring officials of the churches, and not the bishop of Caesarea, ordained Dion bishop of Jerusalem when Narcissus departed. But when Narcissus reappeared, again he was called by the brethren, according to Eusebius, and not by the Brother, or the bishop of Caesarea. Narcissus, by the way, held a council with fourteen bishops concerning Easter before the First Ecumenical Council was held. Secondly, because the Bishop of Jerusalem was the first to sign at the First Ecumenical Council, while Eusebius of Caesarea was the fifth. And, generally speaking, metropolitans change round in the order of signatures, and in the places of seats at council meetings, and in the order of addressing emperors, sometimes taking the lead, and sometimes following others. But the Bishop of Jerusalem always comes first among the Fathers attending a council, and on every occasion is numbered with the patriarchs, and never with the metropolitans. Read also Dositheus in the Dodecabilus, Book II, ch. 4. But even if we grant that Jerusalem was subject to Caesarea, what of it? Just as Byzantium was formerly subject to Heraclea, but later, after Byzantium became the seat of a patriarch, Heraclea was made subject to it; so and in like manner, if we allow (what is not a fact) that Jerusalem was subject to Caesarea, after Jerusalem was honored by being made the seat of a patriarch, Caesarea, true enough, retained its own dignity thereafter, in that it remained a metropolis of Palestine, yet it became subordinate to Jerusalem, since it is merely a metropolis, while Jerusalem is a patriarchate (i.e., the seat and headquarters of a patriarch). Read also Ap. c. XXXIV.

## 8

As concerning those who call themselves Puritans and who are claiming to be adherents of the catholic and apostolic Church, it has seemed right to the holy and great Council, when they have had hands laid upon them, to let them remain in the clergy. Above all, that it is fitting for them to confess to this in writing, to wit, that they will agree to and will adhere to the dogmas of the catholic and apostolic Church. That is, that they will hold communion with persons married a second time, and with those who in time of persecution have lapsed from the faith; regarding whom a length of time has been fixed, and a due season has been set, for their penance. So that they may adhere to the dogmas of the catholic Church in everything. Wherever they are the only ones found to have been ordained, whether in villages or in cities, they shall remain in the same habit (or order). But wherever there is a Bishop of the catholic Church, and some of them are joining it, it is obvious that, as the Bishop of the Church will keep the dignity of bishop, the one called a bishop among the so-called Puritans shall have the honor of a Presbyter, unless it should seem better to the Bishop that he should share in the honor of the name. But if this does not please him, he shall devise a position either of a chorepiscopus or of a presbyter, with the object of having him seem to be wholly in the clergy, lest there should be two bishops in the same city.

(Ap. cc. XLVI, XLVII, LXVIII; c. VII of the 2nd; c. XCV of the 6th; cc. VII, VIII of Laodicea; c. LXVI of Carthage; cc. I, XLVII of Basil; c. XII of Theophilus; c. XIV of the 7th; c. XIII of Ancyra; c. XIV of Neocaesarea; cc. VIII, X. of Antioch.)

## Interpretation

The ones called Puritans here were the Novatians.[12] The man Novatian himself was a presbyter in the Church of the Romans who would not accept those who had renegaded in time of persecution, but had repented, nor would he give communion to persons that had married twice. He had also declared that after baptism a sinner could no longer have mercy bestowed upon him, according to Epiphanius, Haer. 59, and Augustine, Haer. 38. So, although this man did not err as respecting the dogmas of the faith, nor was he a heretic, but was instead a schismatic (or sectarian), according to c. I of St. Basil, yet, because of his hatred of brethren, and his being of an unsympathetic frame of mind, and proud, he was anathematized by the Council held in Rome in the time of Pope Cornelius, according to Eusebius, and by the councils held in Carthage in the time of Cyprian, and by the councils held against him in Antioch and in Italy. Those who adhered to his misbelief were called after him Novatians. These facts being assumed to be known, the present Canon asserts that in case any such Novatians join the catholic Church, it has appeared reasonable that they should have hands laid[13] upon them, and thus be received, and be allowed to remain in their clergy, those, that is to say, who really were clergymen in the habit (thus c. LXVI of Carthage accepted the Donatists with an imposition of the hands); nevertheless, they must confess in writing that they have to keep all dogmas of the catholic Church, that they will accept those who have married twice, and those who were forced by necessity to deny Christ, and that they will accomodate them, according to fixed times, with the

Canon of repentance applicable to deniers; and thus, wherever they happen to be, whether in cities or in villages, they shall be left in the clergy and rank in which each of them found himself when he was ordained: that is to say, a bishop shall remain a bishop; a presbyter, a presbyter; and a deacon, a deacon. However, a bishop shall remain a bishop where there is no Orthodox bishop of the catholic Church. But if in the same church there is also an Orthodox bishop, the latter shall have the office and dignity, and all the business, and the name of bishop, while the bishop formerly a Novatian shall have only the honor of a presbyter, and the nominal title of bishop,[14] but he shall not perform any priestly act as a bishop, in order to avoid having this improper and absurd situation arise in which two bishops are officiating in one and the same city (concerning which see Ap. c. XXXV, and c. XVI of the 1st-&2nd;[15] in case, however, he refuses to be content with this arrangement, the Orthodox bishop must allow him to have a position as a chorepiscopus,[16] or as a presbyter, in order that he too may be numbered among those who are in holy orders and clergymen, and not appear to be wholly deprived of the clergy.

## 9

If some persons have been promoted to Presbyters without due examination, or when given a hearing confessed their sins to them,[17] and after they confessed, the men, acting contrary to the Canon, laid hand upon such persons, the Canon will not admit them. For the catholic Church insists upon irreproachability.

(Ap. cc. XXV, LXI; cc. IX, X of Neocaesaria; cc. III, V, VI of Theophilus).

### Interpretation

The present Canon decrees that those who are about to be admitted to holy orders must be clear from sins that preclude holy orders, and that their life and their behavior and conduct must be looked into. If, however, some persons have been made presbyters without being examined, or upon examination confessed their sins, such as preclude admission to holy orders, and the prelates who examined them, acting contrary to the Canons, ordained them priests, such persons, I say, having been invested with holy orders unworthily, are not admitted to the privilege of performing sacred rites. For after being exposed by others, or they themselves confessed to sins incapacitating one for holy orders which they had committed before applying for ordination, they can be defrocked according to Zonaras and Balsamon. Or they may cease to perform sacred rites, according to the Anonymous annotator of the Canons. But the Canon also adds an explanation of the reason why those who have fallen into sins are not admissible to holy orders. Because, it says, the catholic Church demands and wants priests to be irreproachable, or, in other words, exempt from the charge of sins, just as St. Paul commands that a bishop should be, by saying: "A bishop then must be irreproachable" (mistranslated in the Authorized Version "blameless") (I Tim. 3:2), or, in other words, not only unchargeable at law, but also entirely unimpeachable and free from every accusation, as touching his moral character.[18]

Concordantly with the present Canon c. IX of Neocaesarea also decrees relevantly hereto, by saying: If any presbyter before his ordination committed the sin of carnal mingling, and after his ordination confesses it, let him function in holy orders no more. Likewise if even a deacon has thus sinned, and has confessed after he was ordained, let him serve only in the capacity of a servant, in accordance with c. X of the same Council. Canon III of Theophilus says that if anyone has been ordained a presbyter through ignorance without his being worthy of serving in this capacity, and has been exposed after his ordination, he is to be ousted from holy orders. Likewise in the case of a deacon that has been ordained in spite of his being unworthy, he is to be deposed in accordance with c. V of the same saint. It is also to be observed that all sins that entail deposition from holy orders when committed before admission to holy orders, similarly entail deposition also when committed after admission to holy orders, when exposed, or when confessed after admission to holy orders. Not only do they entail deposition, but they also act as a barrier to becoming a priest.

## 10

As many persons as have been guilty of serious lapses and have been ordained in ignorance thereof, or even after the ordinator has become aware thereof, will not be admitted under the ecclesiastical Canon. For when they have become known, they shall be deposed.

(Ap. c. LXII; cc. I, III, XII of Ancyra; c. X of Peter.)



### **Interpretation**

All those who have offended by lapsing seriously, i.e., by denying our Lord Jesus Christ, and have afterwards repented, are incapable of becoming priests. For how can anyone become a priest that is prevented according to the canons of the Church from partaking of the divine mysteries until he dies? On this account the present Canon says that as many persons as have been ordained from among God-deniers, either because the prelate who ordained them did not know about the denial, or because, though knowing about it, he blinked or scorned the fact, and thought that ordination would purify them as does baptism, in accordance with the interpretation given by Balsamon — this fact, I say, of their having been ordained, that is to say, in ignorance or in spite of knowledge of the facts, does not offer any bar or obstacle to the application of the ecclesiastical canon, so as, that is to say, to prevent its operating to exclude them from holy orders. Because once they have been detected or have revealed themselves, so as to show in what manner they have been ordained, they have to be deposed. All those persons, on the contrary, who before baptism sacrificed to idols are nevertheless qualified to be admitted to holy orders after they have been baptized, on the ground that they have received a bath of redemption, in accordance with c. XII of Ancyra. All those persons, furthermore, who have undergone torture for the sake of Christ, and for His sake have been imprisoned, and have been forcibly compelled to have their hands defiled with incense or to take sacrificial offers of food in their mouth — all such persons, provided the rest of their life has been fairly good, may be ordained clergymen, according to c. III of the same council. Note also that not only those persons are to be deposed who have denied Christ before ordination and have afterwards been ordained, but also those who have denied Him after ordination; read also Ap. c. LXII.

### **11**

As concerns those persons who have transgressed without any need, or without being deprived of goods, or without being in any peril or in any such strait as obtained during the tyranny of Licinius, it has deemed fit to the Council, notwithstanding that they did not deserve philanthropic (or humane) treatment, to be kind to them. As many, therefore, as genuinely repent and are remorseful shall pass three years among audients as believers, and for seven years they shall do penance as succumbents. In addition, for two years they shall commune without oblation in prayers with the laity.

(c. VI of Ancyra; c. III of Peter; cc. LXXIII, LXXXI of Basil; c. II of Nyssa.)

### **Interpretation**

There are other Canons which deal with those who deny the faith as a result of great violence or dire necessity. The present Canon deals with those persons who deny it without being forced to do so. It says in effect: As for those who have transgressed the faith in Christ without being prompted to do so by any necessity, or peril, or deprivation of their property, as happened to those who lived in the time of the tyrant Licinius,[19] though they, I say, have not deserved to be treated philanthropically and clemently, it has appeared best nevertheless to the Council to show them mercy. So, as many as truly and from the depth of their heart, and not feignedly and falsely and lyingly, are repentant on account of the sin they committed, shall be obliged to spend three years with the so-called “listeners” (audients). This means that they shall have to stand in the narthex (of the church) at the “beautiful and royal gates” of the temple (or nave), and of the church, in order to listen to the Holy Scriptures until the deacon pronounces the words “All catechumens come forward”; thereupon they shall leave the church. For seven (Note of Translator. — The original says “two,” apparently by mistake) years they shall be succumbent; that is to say, in other words, they shall enter the nave, and shall stand, when there, in the rear of the pulpit, but shall leave along with the catechumens when the deacon pronounces the words “all catechumens come forward.” And for two years they shall join in prayer with the laity. That is to say, in other words, they shall stand together with the faithful and pray, and not leave with the catechumens, though without partaking of the divine mysteries (communion) until the two years are ended.[20]

All those persons who denied the faith simply because the tyrants threatened to torture them, which is tantamount to saying without being forced to do so, are excluded from the divine mysteries for six years, according to c. VI of Ancyra. Those, on the other hand, who have denied the faith of their own accord, without suffering anything terrible, but only cowardice and fear, after showing fruit worthy of repentance over a period of four years, shall be allowed the benefit thereof, according to c. III of Peter. But according to c. II of Nyssa whoever denies Christ of his own accord, shall have his whole lifetime as his term of repentance, without being allowed to pray together with the faithful in the church, or to partake at all of the divine mysteries. In identically the same manner his brother Basil, too, commands the same things in his c. XIII, by saying that anyone that has denied Christ is under obligation to remain all his life long with the “weepers” (called flentes in Latin), or, in other words, to stand outside of even the narthex in the vestibule of temple (or of the nave), and to beg the laity entering the church to pray for him to the Lord. In c. LXXXI of the same saint it says that those who without any great necessity denied the faith and ate of the table of the demons, and swore Greek oaths, are to be excommunicated for three years, and

after eight more years are to be allowed to commune.[21] In order to enable you to understand better, O reader, what positions were occupied by “weepers,” by “listeners,” by “kneelers,” and by “costanders,” behold, at the end of this book we have inserted a diagram, or drawing, or architectural plan, of the church building; and you should carefully and diligently examine it. Concerning “weepers,” and concerning penitents in general, a historical account is given by Sozomen, who says (Book VII, ch. 16): “In the beginning it seemed fitting to the priests for sinners to tell about their sins with the congregation of the church acting as witnesses like spectators in a theater. Later, however, the best policy prevailed, which was indeed one of discreetness and sageness, whereby sinners approached and confessed their life deeds . . .” And again he says: “In the church of the Romans the place of penitents is exposed to view . . . So there penitents stand downcast and mournful, and after the divine liturgy is over the poor wretches, instead of partaking of communion, fall to the ground upon their face with much sobbing and wailing. From the other direction comes the Bishop running and he too likewise falls to the ground weeping tears and uttering laments, and along with them the entire congregation burst out crying and shedding copious tears. Afterwards the Bishop is the first to lift himself up from the ground and stand up, and he lifts up the penitents, and after praying aloud to God on account of their sins, he dismissed them and they go their way.”[22]

## 12

As for those persons who were summoned by the grace, and after displaying a preliminary enthusiasm and taking off their belts, they returned, like dogs to their vomit, in such a fashion that some of them even wasted money in an effort to re-establish themselves in the army by means of beneficia (a Latin word meaning much the same as the English word gift), let them be succumbents for ten years after devoting three years to “listening” (as audients). But in addition to all these requirements it is requisite to examine into the will (or inclinations) and the kind of repentance. For as regards all those who with fear, and tears, and patience, and the doing of good to others have displayed proofs of their conversion by actual performance and not by mere pretense, after they have fulfilled the time fixed for their “listening” period, they shall participate in prayers unrestrictedly, with the further concession of a right to the Bishop to devise some more philanthropic (or humane) treatment regarding them. But as for those who acted unconcernedly, and who thought the pretense of going to church a sufficient proof of their conversion, let them fulfill the time to the utmost limit.

(cc. IX, XI of Peter; c. CII of the 6th; cc. II, V, VII of Ancyra; cc. I, II of Laodicea; cc. II, III, LXIV, LXXXIV of Basil; cc. IV, V, VII and VIII of Nyssa.)

## Interpretation

This Canon, too, appears to be speaking of Christian soldiers living in the time of Licinius. It decrees thus: As regarding all Christian soldiers who having been called and having been strengthened by divine grace displayed at first courage and eagerness for martyrdom, and cast aside their belts, which were their army decorations, but thereafter returned, like dogs to their own vomit, which is to say, repented, and denied the faith, insomuch that some of them even spent money and by means of beneficia, or, more plainly speaking, with gifts and benefactions (for that is what this Latin word signifies) they regained their former status in the army; as for them, I say, after they have done three years in the place assigned to “listeners,” let them do also ten years more in the place assigned to “kneelers.” That is to say, in other words, though allowed to enter the church, they must leave together with catechumens. Besides all this, however, the prelate and the spiritual father ought to examine into the likings and proclivities of such faith-deniers, and the kind and mood of their repentance.[23] For all those who repent with fear of God, and who propitiate God with tears and penitential contrition, and patiently endure hardships, and do good to others in a charitable way, as, for instance, by giving alms, and other virtues, and, generally speaking, who repent truly and genuinely, and not fictitiously and in appearance only; as for these persons, I say, after they fulfill the said three years with “listeners,” they may rightfully pray with the faithful, and need not leave the church (ahead of time). In addition to this concession, the prelate is permitted to show them still more kindly treatment and mercy. But as for all those who repent unconcernedly and carelessly, and think that it is enough evidence of repentance for them to go to church ostensibly with “kneelers” and to leave again with catechumens; as for these persons, I say, let them fulfill all three years of “listening,” and the entire ten years of succumbency.[24]

Canons II, V, and VII of Ancyra, and cc. I and II of Laodicea agree that penances ought to be accommodated to the repentance and complaisance of penitents. So do cc. CII of the 6th and II and III and LXIV and LXXXIV of Basil, and cc. IV, V, VII, and VIII of Nyssa. In this connection, too, c. XXVIII of Nicephorus says that if a secular person of his own free will confesses his mistakes, the spiritual father (i.e., the confessor) may make him an “economy,” i.e., may allow him an adjustment in regard to the matter of penances. Read also cc. IX and XI of Peter.

As concerns those who are making their exit, the old and canonical Law shall be kept even now, so that, if anyone is exciting, let him not be deprived of the final and most necessary[25] equipment (or viaticum). If, however, after all hope has fled, and he has been given communion, he again comes to be looked upon as being among the living, let him stay with those who participate in prayer only. In general, moreover, as concerning anyone at all that is on the point of making his exit, if he asks to partake of the Eucharist, let the Bishop impart to him the oblation with a trial.

#### **Interpretation**

After these divine Fathers prescribed concerning penance, and in what way, and for how long a time Christ-deniers ought to be excluded from communion, now in the present Canon they are prescribing that all such persons as are in danger of dying are to be accorded the benefit of the old and canonical law (which appears to be c. VI of the Council held in Ancyra, this being an earlier one than the First Ecumenical). So that, in effect, whoever has been despaired of as being about to die, let him not be deprived of the last and final and most necessary equipment for that journey and departure, which equipment consists in partaking of the divine mysteries.[26] If, however, the one who has been thought to be dying, and has already partaken of the mysteries of communion, again becomes alive and regains his health, let him stand only with the faithful, and let him pray with them, not, however, to partake of communion. But Balsamon says that such a person as this one of whom the Canon is speaking here, if he was occupying the place assigned to consistents (or “costanders”), he ought on this account to be ordered to stay in that place again; but if he was in the place assigned to audients (or “listeners”), again he ought to stay there. And, in general, everyone in danger ought to return to that canon after communion in which he had been before communion.[27] And to lay down a catholic and common canon, let the Bishop, or even the spiritual father, with a trial, impart the divine Mysteries to any person that is in mortal danger and asks to partake of the Holy Eucharist.

As concerning catechumens and lapsers,[28] it has seemed proper to the holy great Council to let them off with only three years’ listening and to allow them thereafter to pray together with catechumens.

(c. V of Neocaes, c. XIX of Laod.; c. XX of Basil; c. VI of Timothy; c. V. of Cyril.)

#### **Interpretation**

They are called catechumens because this word is one derived from the Greek verb catecho (altered to “catechize” in English), which is defined as meaning to teach beginners the faith by word of mouth, because these persons had to be catechized and taught the dogmas of the Orthodox faith. They were divided into two classes. The first class, which was the more perfect and complete, was called that of “knee-bowers,” they having embraced the faith and having deferred only the rite of baptism. Wherefore they were allowed to come to church and stay there until the time came for the catechumens’ prayer, according to c. XIX of Laodicea, and after they had said this prayer under their breath (or, as the Greek has it, “mystically”) and had had the priest lay his hand upon them, they bowed their knee. But when the time came for the pronouncement of the words “All catechumens come forward,” they had to leave the church. The second class was the more imperfect and incomplete, and was called that of the “listeners,” who stood in the narthex towards the “royal gates” and listened to the Holy Scriptures, and after hearing the divine gospels they would leave, according to Blastaris and the commentator on Armenopoulos in the latter’s Epitome of the Canons (Section 5, Heading 3). These two classes are to be seen clearly depicted in the drawing of the temple which we have traced. Cardinal Bonas (Book I concerning liturgical matters) and some others, in addition to these two classes, enumerate two more classes, which they gleaned from the writings of the Western Fathers. One of these classes was called that of the “co-petitioners” (because they were requesting to be baptized), and the other was known as that of the “elect,” who were thus called after being enrolled in the list of persons to be baptized, who were designated the illuminated, or illuminati, in ch. 7 of Book VIII of the Apostolical Injunctions. The same name is applied to them also by St. Cyril in his catechism. Chapter 8 of the same Book of the Injunctions refers to them as being baptized, and these persons are likewise mentioned in c. VI of Timothy.[29] These facts being as stated, the present Canon proceeds to say: As for all catechumens that belong to the first and higher class and have denied the faith, it has appeared reasonable to this holy great Council for them to stand for three years in the ranks of the second and lower class of catechumens, namely, the audients, or “listeners,” in the narthex of the church, and after three years have passed for them to pray together with the first and higher class of catechumens inside the church. But one likely as not might justifiably wonder why the councils impose penances upon sinful catechumens. St. Basil the Great in his c. XX says: “And in general the events in the life of a catechumen do not entail responsibilities.” By way of solving this apparent contradiction it may be said, according to Zonaras, that St. Basil the Great did not say for the catechumens not to be penanced for sinning before baptism. For in that case he would have been contradicting the Canons of the Councils; but

what he really said was simply that the sins of the catechumens did not entail responsibilities, or, in other words, any liability to punishment after they have been baptized, since everything sinful that the catechumens did while they were catechumens, but also even whatever sinful acts they committed before becoming catechumens, i.e., when they were unbelievers, are all pardoned and wiped out by virtue of the rite of holy baptism. But the catechumens are penanced nevertheless, because, though not really in the church nor actually members of the Church, yet, with respect to yearning and willingness of soul and virtually, they are in the Church. For, according to (Gregory) the Theologian (in his Discourse on the Lights) these persons are on the threshold of piety, and have been caught in the faith, even though they have not yet been reborn through baptism (seeing that they are not utterly without hope of salvation, either, in case they should die unbaptized as a matter of necessity), as is shown by the funeral oration of St. Ambrose respecting Emperor Valentinian, who died while still being catechized. So the Councils on this account penance catechumens, on the ground that they already are intimates, and have accepted the faith, and are nominally Christians; accordingly, whatever the law says to them, it is speaking to them as to persons in the law, according to the Apostolic statement (Rom. 3:19).

## 15

Because of much disturbance and the mutinies which took place, it has seemed best to do away altogether with the custom which obtained contrary to the Apostolical Canon in some places, so as not to allow either a Bishop or a Presbyter or a Deacon to go from one city to another. If, after the holy and great Council's definition, anyone should attempt to do such a thing, or has actually undertaken to do such a thing, let the resulting affair be invalidated by all means, and let him be reinstated in the church in which the Bishop or Presbyter[30] in question was ordained.

(Ap. cc. XIV, XV; c. VI of the 4th; cc. III, XXI of Antioch; cc. I, XVI of Sardican, c. LVII of Car.)

### Interpretation

The present Canon ordains these decrees: It has seemed reasonable to abolish definitively the custom which had been in vogue in some places contrary to the ordinance and legislation of the Apostolical Canon (namely, Ap. c. XIV, and most especially XV), because of numerous disturbances, and fights with one another, which had ensued as a result of this transgression. That is to say, not to allow a Bishop or Presbyter or Deacon to go from one city to another. If, after this holy Council has laid down the present Canon, anyone should try to do such a thing as this, and go from one city to another, this change of station is to be held void and invalid without fail; and the Bishop or Presbyter or Deacon shall be restored to his original position in that church in which he was ordained, since not only bishops but also presbyters and deacons must be ordained in a definite church, and not detachedly, according to c. VI of the 4th. Read also Ap. cc. XIV and XV.

## 16

Any Presbyters or Deacons, or other persons covered by the Canon, who take the risk, without having the fear of God before their eyes, or keeping aware of the ecclesiastical Canon, of departing from their own church, they must not be admitted at all in another church, but they must be stringently forced to return to their own parish, or, in case they insist, it is proper for them to be excluded from communion. If, on the other hand, anyone should surreptitiously snatch away one belonging to another and ordain him in his own church, without the consent of his Bishop, from whom the one covered by the Canon departed, let the ordination be invalid.

### Interpretation

The Canon next preceding this one ordains for presbyters and deacons to be reinstated in the church in which they were ordained, while the present Canon punishes them with suspension if they refuse to return, by decreeing that any presbyters or deacons, or others enumerated in the Canon along with such persons, and listed among the clergy,[31] without fearing God or knowing the Canon of the Church (i.e., Ap. c. XV), rashly depart from that church in which they were ordained, they must not be admitted to another (without letters commendatory and dimissory, that is to say), but, on the contrary, must be forced to return to their own church; if, however, they insist on having their own way, they are to be denied communion, not with the Mysteries, not with the laymen and faithful in the church (for in this case the present Canon would be contrary to Ap. c. XV, which does not exclude such offenders from communion with laymen in the church), but with their fellow presbyters and deacons in the same order. That is to say, in other words, they are not to be allowed to officiate along with those in holy orders, but are to remain idle, or interdicted. But if any Bishop should dare to grab a strange clergyman fraudulently and ordain him (to a higher rank perhaps) in his own church, without the Bishop of that clergyman being willing to allow this, from whom he departed, such an ordination is to be void and invalid. Read also Ap. c. XV.

Because of the fact that many persons covered by the Canon, out of greed and in pursuit of shameful profits (willfully) forgot the divine passage of Holy Writ saying “who hath not lent out his money at interest” (Ps. 15:5), and in lending demanded a percentage commission or profit, the holy and great Council has deemed it just and right that in case anyone is found after the adoption of this definition receiving interest for the use of money, or otherwise exploiting the matter, or demanding commission, or through any other subterfuge contriving to exact shameful profits, he shall be deposed from the clergy and shall be an alien to the Canon.

(Ap. c. XLIV; c. X of 6th; c. IV of Laod.; cc. V, XX of Car.; c. IV of Basil.)

### **Interpretation**

Various Canons prohibit the charging of interest on money, but the present one expressly ordains this, to wit: Since many canonic, or clergymen, being fond of greed and shameful profits, have forgotten the saying in the Psalm of David which says that the chosen man is one “who hath not lent out his money at interest,” meaning the righteous man who is destined to dwell in the holy mountain of the Lord, or, in other words, in the heavenly kingdom, and in lending money have been exacting a percentage charge[32] from their debtors, consisting, for example, of twelve cents, or pennies, say, per hundred (or per dollar), which was an excessive interest — because, I say, clergymen were actually doing this, this holy and great Council deemed it right and just that if hereafter any clergyman should be found to be charging interest, or treating the matter as a commercial proposition, or turning it to his own advantage in any other way (while pretending not to charge interest, that is to say, when lending his money to those in need of it, yet agreeing with them that he too is to receive some part of the interest and profit accruing from the money, thus calling himself, not a lender, but a sharetaker or partner), and be caught doing this, or demanding a commission (or half the percentage, which would amount, in this case, to six cents, or six pennies, instead of the twelve comprised in the full amount of total interest, i.e., of interest at 12%), or should invent any similar means of making a shameful profit, any such person shall be deposed from the clergy and shall be estranged from the canonical order. Read also Ap. c. XLIV.

It has come to the notice of the holy and great Council that in some regions and cities Deacons are giving the Eucharist to Presbyters, which is something that neither the Canon nor custom has allowed those who have not the authority to offer, to give the body of Christ to those offering it. It has also further been learned that already some Deacons touch the Eucharist even before the Bishops. Let all these things, therefore, be done away with, and let Deacons conform to their own standards, well knowing that they are servants of the Bishop, and that they are inferior to Presbyters. Let them take the Eucharist in due order after the Presbyters, with either the Bishop or the Presbyters administering it to them. But neither let it be permissible for Deacons to sit among Presbyters, for to do so is contrary to the Canon, and is contrary to due order: if, in disregard of these definitions, anyone refuses to obey, let him be dismissed from his diaconate.

(c. XX of Laodicea; c. VII of the 6th Ecum. C.)

### **Interpretation**

Good order must be observed everywhere, and especially among those in holy orders; for this reason the present seeks to correct anything that is done in disregard of due order. For it says that it has come to the knowledge of this holy and great Council that in some regions and cities the deacons are giving the divine Eucharist to presbyters, a thing which neither any written Canon nor any custom has sanctioned, that is to say, for deacons to administer, or impart, the body of Christ to the priests who conduct the rite connected therewith, seeing that deacons themselves have no authority to perform the office of administering this sacred rite.[33] It has also been revealed in addition to this that some of the deacons are communing before the presbyters have done so. So let all these disorderly proceedings be eliminated, and let deacons remain within their bounds, or, that is to say, let them neither administer the Eucharist to priests, nor partake thereof before the priests do, since they know well enough that they are servants of the Bishop, as is indicated also by their very name (i.e., in Greek the word deacon signifies servant, just as does the word minister in English); for deacon (as a Greek word) really means servant. They are inferior to and lower than presbyters; and what is inferior must be blessed by what is superior, as the Apostle says, and not the opposite way round (Heb. 7:7). Let them receive the divine Eucharist in due order after the presbyters have partaken thereof, letting the Bishop administer it to them, or it may be administered to them by a presbyter (in case the Bishop is not present). But neither have deacons any right to sit among presbyters, since this too is disorderly and contrary to canon; for it tends to intimate that deacons are peers of presbyters, which is not really so. But if, after this Canon has been formulated, any of the deacons should be unwilling to submit to this rule, let them be deprived of their diaconate.

In keeping with the present Canon c. VII of the 6th is also in effect. For it commands that any deacon that has the audacity to take a seat before the presbyters (have done so) is to be lowered in rank and to become the lowest servant and least menial in his own order, no matter what ecclesiastical office he may occupy;[34] except only if he go to another city as the personal representative of his own Patriarch, or Metropolitan, he is then to be honored more than the presbyters. But even c. XX of Laodicea says that a deacon must not sit in front of a presbyter. Canon LVI of the same Council prohibits priests from sitting down in the Bema before the Prelate makes his entrance. Note that according to Zonaras and Balsamon c. XVIII of the present Council has reference to those deacons who during divine service within the Bema sit down before the presbyters have done so, and on this account it punishes them with a severer chastisement, or chastening, by depriving them, that is to say, of their diaconate. Canon VII of the 6th refers to those who sit down before the presbyters do, not in church, but in outside assemblies, and on this account it chastises them more lightly, by merely lowering their proper station.

## 19

As concerns Paulianists who afterwards took refuge in the catholic Church, it is made a definition that they be rebaptized without fail. If any of them in the past have been covered in the clergy under examination as to whether they appear to be blameless and irreproachable, after being rebaptized let them be ordained by a Bishop of the catholic Church. But if the investigation finds them unfitted, let them be deposed. Likewise as concerning deaconesses, and all those who are embraced by the Canon in any way and are being examined, the same form shall be observed. We have referred to the deaconesses who have been examined under cover of the habit, since they have neither any claim to appointment to any order, so that they are to be examined without fail among the laymen.

(Ap. c. XLVII; c. II of the 1st Ec. C.; c. XCV of the 6th; cc. VII, VIII of Laodicea; c. LXVI of Carth.; c. XV of the 4th; c. XIV and XL of the 6th; c. XLIV of Basil; cc. VI, LI, CXXXV of Carth.)

### Interpretation

The present Canon decrees with reference to persons that had been followers of the heresy of Paul of Samosata,[35] but who later resorted to the catholic Church, that the Canon and form requires such heretics to be rebaptized by decision (note that the Council improperly designates the baptism of Paulianists as a baptism, and in comparing it with our baptism, and not with itself, it employed also the verb “rebaptize,” which means to baptize a second time; and see the prolegomena to the Council of Carthage with respect to their not being baptized in identically the same manner as Orthodox Christians). But if some of them had been ordained clergymen before their Orthodox baptism, because the prelates who ordained them were not aware of the fact that they were heretics or that they had been ordained in the clergy according to the Paulianists; then and in that case, I say, after being rebaptized with an Orthodox baptism, if their life appears to have been blameless and unimpeachable,[36] let them be ordained by a Bishop of the catholic and Orthodox Church, since the former ordination which they had received while heretics is not considered an ordination at all. For how can anyone that has not been baptized in accordance with the Orthodox faith receive a visitation of the Holy Spirit, and grace, in ordination? But if when examined they are found to be unworthy of holy orders, they must be deposed, or, in other words, they must be ousted from the clergy. For the word depose was employed here improperly instead of the word oust, since, properly speaking, one who has previously been elevated to the height of holy orders and of the clergy, is said to be deposed. But as to these men who have never received any ordination at all, from what height shall they be deposed? From none, of course. Or perhaps it means for them to be deposed from the (height? of the) holy orders and clergy claimed by the Paulianists. For just as it called what they instituted baptism, it also called what they had proposed clergy, and by the same token deposition, in the same way as c. VIII of Laodicea calls the ones set up by the Montanists clergy. But this which we have asserted as concerning men must also be observed in identically the same manner in regard to women: that is to say, in other words, if any Orthodox Bishop has ordained any of the women of the Paulianists deaconesses, because of his being unaware of their heresy, or if they had been ordained in the order of deaconesses instituted by the Paulianists, in this case, I say, let them be rebaptized; and thereafter if they appear to be worthy of a diaconate, let them be ordained deaconesses too. (See also Ap. cc. XLVI and XLVII, and c. VII of the 2nd.) As for that which the Canon proceeds to add, to wit, “We have referred to the deaconesses who have been examined under cover of the habit, since they have neither any claim to appointment to any order, so that they are to be examined without fail among the laymen,” notwithstanding that these words are hard to understand, yet their meaning is this: We have referred to deaconesses separately, who wore this habit when they were with Paulianists, or, at any rate, who were following the profession of deaconesses, since they too, like their other clergymen, ought to be reckoned as laymen, because just as those clergymen possessed no real ordination, being destitute of divine grace, so too the deaconesses among them possessed only the habit of deaconesses, but no true appointment impartitive of grace; so that they ought to be reckoned as laywomen after baptism, just as they were prior thereto.

Canon XCV of the 6th says in identically the same manner as does the present Canon: It is made a definition that Paulianists be rebaptized, by which name is meant those who have been adherents of Paul's heresy ever since they were born. Canon XV of the 4th, however, commands that a deaconess be ordained such when forty years old (as does also c. 14 of the 6th, and c. XL of the same council says the same thing); but it anathematizes her if after staying a short while in the liturgy[37] she later gets married. Canon XLIV of St. Basil excommunicates from the Mysteries any deaconess that commits fornication for a period of seven years, though it does not deprive her of prayer and communion with the faithful. The second ordinance of the first Title of the Novels (Photius, Title VIII, ch. 14) says that a deaconess ought not to live with anyone of the male sex who might arouse a suspicion of immodesty or indecency. If when ordered by the Bishop to oust him from sharing her dwelling or sleeping quarters, she postpones the time, she is deprived of the diaconate and is shut up in a convent for the rest of her life. Read also the footnote to Ap. c. XLVII.

## 20

Since there are some persons who kneel in church on Sunday and on the days of Pentecost, with a view to preserving uniformity in all parishes, it has seemed best to the holy Council for prayers to be offered to God while standing.

(c. XC of the 6th; c. XV of Peter.)

### Interpretation

The customs handed down by the Apostles and the Fathers ought all to be observed in common by all the churches, and not some of them by some churches alone. For this reason the present Canon ordains that inasmuch as some Christians bow their knee even on Sunday and on the days from Easter to Pentecost, which is contrary to the Canons and improper, to the end that all Apostolical and patristic traditions — one of which is not to bow the knee on Sunday and throughout Pentecost — may be kept in all Orthodox churches the world over, it has seemed reasonable to this holy Council for all Christians to offer their prayers to God on these days, not while kneeling, but while standing upright.

### Notes

[1] The duration of catechization is not fixed the same by all. The Apostolical Injunctions ordain that a catechumen is to be catechized for a year. Canon 42 of the regional council held in Illiberia, a town in Spain, a little before the First Ecumenical Council, prescribed two years. Justinian Novel 144 also prescribed two years for Samaritans joining the faith. Canon 25 of the local council held in Agatha in the year 506 fixed the time as eight months for converted Jews. Canon VIII of the 7th Ecum. C. will not have us accept Jews feigning belief, but only those who really believe and who criticize the practices of the Jews. Some writers, however, think that catechization occupied only as many days as there are in Great Lent, inferring this from c. XLV of Laodicea, and from Jerome's letter to Pammachius, and from the first catechism of Cyril of Jerusalem. But perhaps from these premises nothing less is to be inferred except the fact that during Great Lent the last and more accurate part of catechization was completed, because at that time catechumens used to be baptized during the night of Great Saturday and of Easter. Sometimes, however, the duration of catechization was curtailed on account of necessary circumstances. That is why catechumens in danger of dying used to be baptized before the time fixed for catechization had expired, according to c. XII of Neocaesarea, c. XLVII of Laodicea, c. LII of Carthage, c. V of Basil, and c. V of Cyril. But the Burgundians, too, a nationality of France, on account of the fervid faith they showed in Christ, and on account of the need they had to fight the Huns, with whom they were at war, were catechized in only seven days, and on the eighth day they were baptized by the bishop in one city of France (Socrates, Book VII, ch. 30). Yet, according to this Canon, it is better to let a long time pass that is sufficient to test the catechumen more efficaciously.

[2] Zonaras calls every sin a psychical (or animal) sin that is due to an aberrancy of the three faculties of the soul, namely, the reasoning faculty, the affective faculty, and the desiderative faculty. Balsamon says that a psychical (or animal) sin is any sin that causes an injury to the soul (the Greek name of which is psyche, and the Latin anima), whether the origin of it be traceable to an appetite of the body or to a craving of the soul. Others have considered a psychical sin to be one resulting from passions of the soul, such as presumption, waywardness, etc. Properly, however, the psychical sin spoken of in this Canon is the state of being puffed up, and supercilious, and proud. For it is only this passion that belongs to the spiritual and immaterial nature of the soul; and this is the condemnation and snare into which the Devil fell, according to the saying of the Apostle which the Canon mentions here, and according to the interpretation placed upon it by St. Ambrose. That is why St. Augustine (in Book III concerning the City of God) says that the Devil is not a drunkard or anything else of such a nature, but is, in fact, a conceited and witchlike being. So if a bishop falls into the passion of pride and reveals this by what he says or does, and is exposed by two or three witnesses, let him be dismissed from the clergy, perhaps in order that he may

be humbled and moderate his sentiment, and thus become entitled to be restored to holy orders. But if he keeps on getting prouder, and refuses to cease, let him be completely deposed from his rank. The fact that open pride is a sufficient cause for deposition is also evident from the Novatians, who were ousted from the Church on this account, because out of presumption and pride they called themselves pure and refused to admit those who had denied in time of persecution and had repented, nor would commune with persons married twice. Some authorities, however, have asserted that by “psychical sin” the Canon means here a cacodoxical and impious sentiment or belief or frame of mind. But if this were meant, anyone entertaining it ought not only to cease therefrom, but also to be sternly deposed and to be outlawed and proscribed from the Church. So, inasmuch as pride is a mortal sin, and those who commit a sin involving death forfeit their rank, according to c. XXXII of Basil (which you are advised to read), the present Canon chastises anyone that has fallen into such a sin by unfrocking him.

[3] Not only do ecumenical and regional councils commonly blame and place under a penance those clergymen, or even laymen, who have strange women in their home, whether it be in order to have them do work as servants, as was presbyter Gregory against whom Basil the Great complains, or it be that as an excuse they are alleged to be unprotected and have no one to provide for them, but also separately as individuals every one of the divine Fathers took care to stigmatize this evil. For St. Gregory the Theologian in his epic verses wonders and is at a loss among whom to class those who keep women in their house or have women staying with them in their home, whether they ought to class them among married men, or among unmarried and virgin men, or in a middle group between married men and virgin men; on which account he says:

“As for the subintroductors, as all of them allege indeed,

I know not whether to allow them a marriage, or to keep them with the unmarried.

Or to place them in the middle somewhere between both these groups.

For I at any rate will not praise this thing even though I be criticized.”

The saint of the same name, Gregory of Nyssa, in his discussion of virginity, finds fault with such persons and says: “They not only provide their belly with whatever gives it pleasure, but they even cohabit openly with women, and call such living together a fraternity.” Divine Chrysostom (discourse on those having subintroductae, p. 214 of vol. vi) says the following: “There are some who take virgin girls without a marriage and intercourse, place them in their home permanently, and live with them continuously until extreme old age, not for the sake of giving birth to children (since they claim not to have any sexual intercourse with them), not for the sake of fornication and licentiousness (because they claim to be keeping them virgins and chaste). But if one were to ask them for what reason they are doing this, they have a lot of excuses to offer in reply; yet they have no reasonable and decent excuse. For the real reason of their living with these girls in this fashion is none other than a passionate craving and pleasure which affords them a more intense and vehement sexual appeal than that enjoyed by men living with a lawful wife. Because a wife allows the man living with her unrestricted intercourse and allays vehement sexual love, and often leads the man to satiety of pleasure and inhibits unlimited desire; besides these differences, there are also the parturient pangs of a lawful wife, the inconveniences of giving birth to children, and bringing them up, and the illnesses and weaknesses which she incurs from all these causes ultimately wither the flower of her beauty, and consequently make the center of pleasure less attractive to the man. But in the case of the subintroducta virgin these consequences do not follow. For neither sexual intercourse with her can make the man living with her abate the passionateness of his irresistible desire, nor do parturient pangs and child-rearing wither their flesh; on the contrary such women retain their beauty for many years, because of their remaining untouched by any of the causes destructive of their beauty we have mentioned; in fact they get to be forty years old and nevertheless appear as pretty as girls and young women who have not yet made their debut. Hence a double desire is aroused in men living with such girls, first, because they do not allay their passionate craving and lust for them with the act of mingling and indulgence in sexual intercourse, and secondly, because the object of their passionate craving remains for a long time at its prime and strongly provocative, which object is the pretty face and the beauty of the women. So, according to Basil the Great (ascetic ordinance 4), such men are so overcome by their passions that they have no feeling, but, instead, are like frenzied and drunken men. According to the same Chrysostom (discourse on the fact that an ascetic must not joke) they are all the time being wounded, all the time being preyed upon by wild beasts, all the time indulging in adultery (probably meaning fornication), and being rendered languid by exceeding the bounds of sobriety. And can it be said (asks the saint) that you are a senseless stone and are not scandalized (probably meaning tantalized)? You are a man subject to the passions of human nature. Well, then, how can it be thought possible for one to put fire inside his bosom, or to walk upon burning coals, without getting burnt, when he is an easily inflammable straw. Nevertheless, again Basil the Great (ascetic ordinance 4) says that even though we allow that he



(sc. the one who is keeping subintroductas) is not irritated nor even tantalized by the passion of desire, yet if he be not suffering he cannot in spite of this easily persuade others that he is not actually suffering. But to scandalize the common run of men, without any show of virtue, is not without danger to one who does so. Besides, there is also another consequence to be reckoned with: even granting that the man himself is not injured by looking at the woman, it nevertheless cannot be maintained that the woman is not subject to the passions of the body. Hence she, either being weak in reasoning power or having a most acute passion, has conceived a passion of love for the man who has been so indiscreet as to associate with her; and though he himself has not been wounded, he has wounded her many times without even knowing it.” So in order to avoid having all these consequences follow, every man ought to guard himself, and if possible shun the company of women altogether, or if this is impossible, and he cannot avoid frequent and prolonged meetings with women, and of all others especially women that are leading a monastic life or have grown old as nuns. All clergymen as well as laymen, and especially monks and nuns; since nuns have the same trouble in fighting shy of monks, as monks have in fighting shy of nuns. That is why Abbas (i.e., abbot) Isaac, in admonishing a monk, tells him in addition to these things to avoid canonicae, that is to say, nuns, as though they were fire. But if saints forbid a man to associate with women and nuns, how much more do they not forbid him to live with them? These things which we have said in regard to men keeping subintroductae women, apply also to those who keep beardless young men in their house as subintroducti and are living with them. Hence it is that Gregory the great saint recommends in his epic verses that not only a virgin man, but every other man, and especially every clergyman and monk, should refrain from living with such young men. In fact he says verbatim:

“Beware of every male, but especially of having one as a subintroductus.”

In the ascetic discourse which Basil the Great composed concerning renunciation, he says: If you are a young man with respect to the body, or are an old man with respect to the body, but a young man with respect to sentiment, avoid association with young men as you would a flame. For the enemy having burnt up many men with a desire for such young men, consigned them to the everlasting fire after hurling them down into a yawning chasm of sodomites under the pretext of spiritual love. For those keeping such young men (as the same Basil says in his discourse concerning virginity) are excited to a desire for that object in particular to which they are naturally inclined by an erotic impulse, or, in other words, to a desire for a woman. Hence as a result of the relation they bear to what is natural, they are forced to violate the law with respect to what is unnatural, in seeking the female in the male. Being unable to attain their object, nor being themselves in any position to allay their absurd and improper erotic passion by unnaturally mingling with a male, they suffer the very same consequences as are suffered by those who keep subintroductae women. “For when they gaze” (says the same Basil in the above discourse concerning renunciation) “at the face of the beardless young men and receive a seed of desire from the enemy and sower of evils and woes commonly called the Devil, they reap sheaves of destruction and of perdition. The woes deserving many tears are also plainly visible to those who know history, for they have been time and again inflicted upon the world as a result of beardless young men. For many great lavras (i.e., monastic retreats) and monasteries have been wiped out, and the souls of many men have been swallowed up by Hades.”

[4] Note the present Novel and the above Canons.

[5] That is why Theodoret, in his Ecclesiastical History (Book I, ch. 9), says that “all the Fathers of the present First Council in Nicaea, sending in a conciliar letter to the bishops in Alexandria, stated in writing that the ordinations of bishops ought to be ratified by the Bishop of Alexandria, voting along with them and ratifying the election by the general assembly in Alexandria. Hence Synesius when corresponding with Theophilus says in a letter of his concerning a man named Anthony, who was about to be made a bishop, that the most important point connected with his ordination that needed to be attended to was: “the hand of Theophilus. . . . may it be my lot to join in electing him to an equal rank in holy orders. But there is still one most important point to be attended to, though, by thy sacred hand.” And even the Council held in Chalcedon, in mentioning the present Canon in its Act XIII, says: “This Canon prescribes that ratification of what is done in each particular province must be left to the Metropolitan, and the latter must ordain all the bishops subject to his jurisdiction. For the sacred formality, according to sacred Symeon of Thessalonica, is interpreted as meaning that the synod (or council) must vote for three candidates and they are to be referred to the Metropolitan or to the Patriarch; one of the latter two will then decide which one of the three in question is to receive notification of his ordination; and either he himself will ordain the one chosen with the other prelates assisting in the ceremony, or with his permission others may ordain him.

[6] The reason why the present Canon was issued by the Council was as follows. It used to be the custom with bishops of Egypt and of Libya and of Pentapolis to have the bishop of Alexandria as their chief, and without his approval not to engage in any ecclesiastical action, as Epiphanius says in his Haer. 61. By exercising this authority, Peter the sacred martyr, who was Bishop of Alexandria, deposed Meletius, a Bishop of Lycopolis in Thebais, as Athanasius the Great bears witness in his

second apology. The same saint notes further that before Peter's time, since some bishops in Pentapolis in Upper Libya had accepted the opinion of Sabellius, and his spurious doctrines came to prevail so widely that the Son of God was hardly being preached in the churches, when Dionysius of Alexandria learned about this, he dispatched envoys to them for the purpose of converting them to the orthodox doctrine of the Church. From these facts it becomes evident indeed that even before this First Council was held the Bishop of Alexandria enjoyed Patriarchal privileges also by virtue of an ancient custom (which, in fact, prevailed in consequence of Ap. c. XXXIV, which says that the bishops of each nation ought to recognize one of their number as their chief, and so forth). He had authority not only to govern the ecclesiastical affairs of the provinces and dioceses there, but also to depose bishops and metropolitans of that clime. But because the said Meletius had been deposed by the Bishop of Alexandria, he attempted to violate this custom and to dare to ordain other bishops in the diocese of Alexandria, this present Nicene Council renewed the ancient custom by the terms of the present Canon and again ratified the rule giving the Bishop of Alexandria authority over all the bishops in Egypt, etc. And this was the meaning attached to the present Canon by the Bishops from Egypt at the Council held in Chalcedon, in Act 4 (according to Dositheus, in the Dodecabiblus). This authority is also conferred in c. XXX of the 4th.

[7] For the name Patriarch first began being used in the time of Theodosius the Little. For seeing that the Patriarchs had formerly been called specially Bishops of the Apostolic thrones, this Theodosius first called the Bishop of Rome a Patriarch, and also applied the term to St. Chrysostom, according to what is stated by Socrates in Book VII, ch. 31. This appellation was also mentioned in the Council held in Chalcedon; and it was indeed by Justinian that patriarchs were actually and officially called Patriarchs. This noun signifies two different things: either the bishops who were made superintendents and exarchs in some provinces and dioceses by a common synod, as this was done also by the Second Ecum. Council, according to Socrates (Book V, ch. 8). One of such bishops was St. Gregory of Nyssa, being subject to the Bishop of Caesarea. These prelates were called Patriarchs not by reason of any superiority of their throne, but as a result of a conciliar decision in order that they might have greater authority to exercise for the purpose of implanting and uprooting, because of their being equal to the other Patriarchs. That is why, in writing to Flavian of Antioch, against the Bishop of Caesarea who had treated him scornfully, the Bishop of Nyssa said: "If the dignity be judged sacerdotally, the privilege of both of us has been made equal and one by the Council, but rather it may be said that the care taken in correcting common matters depends upon having the benefit of equality. Or it properly signifies the bishops who have the first honor in the Church by reason of the superiority of their own thrones and the chief office, not being a personal one like that of those, but belonging to their thrones by succession, which were five in number, namely, that of Rome, that of Constantinople, that of Alexandria, that of Antioch, and that of Jerusalem. These bishops were called on the principle of acrostic, Caraj (or in Greek, Karai). For the letter C stands for Constantinople, the first letter a for Alexandria, the letter r for Rome, the second letter a for Antioch, and the letter j for Jerusalem. But because of the fact that the one first mentioned (i.e., the so-called Pope of Rome) bolted the reins, the Patriarch of Constantinople was left as the first among the remaining four. Later a fifth Patriarch was added, namely, the Patriarch of Greater Moscow (i.e., of Russia). But he too is no longer. Although it is a fact that Peter of Antioch in writing to the Bishop of Aquileia said that he alone was specially designated as Patriarch, to which Balsamon assented, yet we do not pay regard to what bishops say about themselves, but to what the catholic Church says about them. Dionysius, too, and Timothy Ailourus called the Bishop of Ephesus a Patriarch, but the Fourth Ecumenical Council disregarded this. Theodore the historian also called the Bishop of Thessalonica a Patriarch, but he addressed him thus either in accordance with the style of address accorded to exarchs, as did the Second Council, as we have said, or, as others say, on account of the many episcopates which he had, totalling some forty in all. (Dositheus in the Dodecabiblus.)

[8] Those belonging to the Roman Church do not interpret this Canon correctly. Hence Pope Felix in a dispute with the Patriarch of Constantinople Acacius, after corrupting it, asserted that the Bishop of Rome possessed sovereign authority in every council, as the Canon (meaning the present one) of the Council in Nicaea intended. Even before him Paschasius, the legate of Pope Leo, cited the same Canon pervertedly in the Fourth Council. Nevertheless, we can ascertain the true meaning of this Council by considering the words themselves of the Canon. We assert, then, because Meletius trespassed upon the rights of the Bishop of Alexandria, as we have said, he gave occasion to this Council to formulate the present Canon and to ordain nothing new, but merely to confirm the practices which had been preserved from an ancient custom, not only in connection with Patriarchs, but also in connection with Metropolitans, and not only in connection with ordinations, which Meletius had abused, but also in the matter of every other right that belongs to Patriarchs and Metropolitans with respect to the churches subject to their jurisdiction. These facts being presupposed, the Canon says: Let the ancient customs prevail which were in vogue in Egypt and Libya and Pentapolis, so that the Bishop in Alexandria will enjoy the privilege of exercising authority over all these territories, since this sort of privilege is allowed also to the Bishop in Rome. At this point note that the pronoun "touto" in the Greek text of the Canon, translated hereinabove "this," refers to nothing else than the custom, for the sake of brevity of speech. "Since this is also the treatment usually accorded to the Bishop of Rome," it says. What treatment is that? That of allowing him to have authority over all persons and territories

subject to his jurisdiction. For just as the Bishop of Rome possesses this customary privilege like the Bishop of Alexandria, in like manner he possesses the same authority as does the latter. That this is the meaning of the Canon is attested also by the Arabic translation of the same Canons, available in the Alexandrian edition. Joseph the Egyptian also attests the same fact, who is an ancient annotator of the Canons of this Council. The same fact is also attested by Dionysius Exiguus in the Latin translation which he made. The fact is further attested and confirmed by the edition of Isidorus of Mercantor; and lastly it is also confirmed by the translation made by Tyrannius Rufinus the presbyter of Aquileia. So, inasmuch as this is the truth of the matter, and the diocese of Rome is limited like that of Alexandria, it is in vain that the Romans imagine that this Canon entitles them to unlimited authority over the whole world. Note further that owing to the fact that the seniority of Rome had remained intact, the present Canon did not renew it. If it had not been the same as it said concerning the Bishop of Alexandria, it would have explained the matter as concerning Rome too. (Dositheus, in the Dodecabiblus.)

[9] Note that the seniority and privileges of the Bishops of Rome, of Alexandria, and of Antioch spoken of by the Canon here are not those of a metropolitan, as certain writers have asserted, but those of a patriarch; for both Balsamon and the Anonymous annotator of the Canons assert that the Canons are speaking of patriarchs. Moreover, John of Antioch, in the Collection of the Canons, and John Scholasticus, in the Nomocanon, in reference to the present Canon, as well as (the same Council's) c. VII, and c. II of the 2nd, and c. VIII of the 3rd, use the heading: "Concerning the honor accorded to Patriarchs by the Canons," and the paraphrasis which Joseph the Egyptian made of the present Canon says the same thing. And the edition of Melchitae of the Arabic text calls the bishops of Alexandria and of Rome patriarchs here (Dositheus, *ibid.*). Only the Patriarchs were privileged to wear sacks, chasubles adorned with multiple crucifixes, and tunics bearing letters of the alphabet and triangles, and not any other persons, according to Balsamon (p. 449 of the *Juris*). (According to Zonaras, however, chasubles adorned with multiple crucifixes alone were allowed also to the bishops of Caesarea, of Cappadocia, of Ephesus, of Thessalonica, and of Corinth; and see the footnote to c. IX of the 4th). They held divine services (i.e., celebrated liturgy) but thrice a year with the sacks, to wit, on Easter Sunday, on the day of Pentecost, and on Christmas, according to Demetrius Chomatianus (p. 318 of the *Juris*). The word patriarch is defined by Leo and Constantine the emperors thus: "A patriarch is a living image of Christ and animate, therein characterizing the truth by deeds and words. Finally, upon the patriarch depends the salvation of the souls entrusted to him, and it is for him to live according to Christ and to be crucified to the world. It is the nature of the patriarch to be didactic, and to level himself to equality without embarrassment with all other men high as well as low" (Title III of the selection of laws, p. 8, of the second book of the *Juris*).

[10] Note that according to Josephus (concerning the Jews, Book VII, ch. 18) the city was named Jerusalem because Melchisedec, who first built the city, and having built therein a sacred temple, he called the city, in allusion thereto, Jerusalem, because it had previously been called Salem and a temple is called (in Greek) "jeron." Others, however, and perhaps more correctly, say, like Procopius (p. 198, vol. I of the *Octateuch*), that the name is derived from Jebus (1 Chron. 11:4) and Salem (Ps. 76:2), other names of the same city, by forming a compound name Jebusalem, which became corrupted to Jerusalem. Howbeit, the name Jerusalem is wholly Hebrew, and denotes "vision of peace," according to the Fathers (though one may say that it is a compound derived from Hebrew and Greek, precisely as the word *antimensium* is derived from Greek and Latin. But in that case it will not longer signify "vision of peace," of course). Though formerly called Jerusalem, the city was subsequently named Aelia capitolia, according to Dion. The name Aelia was derived from Aelius, a surname of Hadrian, who renamed Jerusalem Aelian, according to Theodoret and Eusebius, after it had been torn down and excavated before and plowed under with oxen, and scarcely recognizable on the surface, according to Gregory the Theologian. The descriptive appellation Capitolia was added to the name Aelia because the city was built on the site of the temple of God which, according to the same Dion, the same Hadrian called by the name of the temple in honor of Jupiter which stood in the Capitolium of Rome.

[11] It was named Caesarea because, according to Eusebius, Herod built it to honor the name of Augustus Caesar, though it had formerly been named Tower of Straton. In it, according to Josephus (Book XV, ch. 13, on the Jews), there were statues of Caesar and of Rome. But there were three cities named Caesarea in Asia. One was this metropolis in Palestine; a second Caesarea was that in Cappadocia, though it was also called Caesar's Maza, according to Sozomen, Book V, ch. 4, as well as Mazaca; and a third Caesarea was Caesarea Philippi.

[12] Thus did they call themselves in accordance with their conceited way of thinking, as Eusebius states in his Book VI, ch. 43.

[13] The laying on of hands here is not ordination, as one might perhaps suppose, but it consists in the action of those in holy orders laying their hand on the heads of such heretics, and thus accepting them as penitents. For c. XLIX of Carthage also insists that penitents be accepted thus with laying on of hands, and not, of course, with any ordination. That my words

are true is attested by the Seventh Ecum. C. For when this same Canon was read in the first act of the same Council, and it was asked how the expression “laying on of hands” was to be understood, most saintly Tarasius said that the phrase “laying on of hands” was employed here in the sense of blessing, and not with reference to any ordination. Hence spiritual fathers ought to learn from this Canon to lay their hands on the heads of penitents when they read to them the prayer for pardon, as c. XXXV of Carthage expressly says this. For such a laying on of hands is necessary to the mystery of repentance. Listen also to what the Apostles say in their Injunctions (Book II, ch. 18): “Accept a sinner when he weeps over his sin, and after laying a hand on him, let him remain thereafter in the flock.” And again (*ibid.*, chapters 41 and 43): “Just as you accept an infidel after baptizing him, so shall you restore to the spiritual pasture as purified and clean a sinner after laying a hand upon him.” This laying on of hands serves him in lieu of baptism, since by imposition of the hands the Holy Spirit used to be bestowed upon believers. The custom of this imposition of hands in connection with the new grace came into prevalence from the old. For thus the high priest used to accept by imposition of hands the sacrifices of burnt offerings and those made on the score of sin. See also chapters 1 and 3 and 4 of Leviticus. Note, however, that it was by way of “economy” (or concession) that this Council accepted the Novatians, as St. Basil notes in his c. I. See also the Interpretation of c. VII of the 3rd, where c. XXXIX of the council held in Illyberia says that heretics are to be accepted by the process of laying on of hands.

[14] Just as Meletius, after being subjected to an examination, and judicial trial, was compelled by the first synod held in Lycos to continue life with the mere name of bishop; and thenceforth to ordain no one, either in a city or in a village (Sozomen, *Eccl. Hist.*, Book X, ch. 14; and Socrates, Book X, ch. 9).

[15] In Book IV, ch. 14, of his Ecclesiastical History, when narrating the facts concerning Felix and Liberius, bishops of Rome, Sozomen states that after God had governed matters in this fashion, allowing Felix to die, that is to say, and He left Liberius by himself, in order to avoid having the throne of St. Peter dishonored by being occupied by two functionaries, which is a sign of discord and alien to the ecclesiastical Canon. St. Epiphanius, in his *Haer.* 68, states that Alexandria never had two bishops. And (Pope) Cornelius, the bishop of Rome, in writing to Phanius the bishop of Antioch, accuses Novatian of trying to make himself, and, in fact, of actually making himself, a bishop of Rome, when as a matter of fact Cornelius himself was the lawful bishop in that city. “How, then, is it,” he goes on to say, “that he did not know that there can be but one bishop in one church, and not two?”

[16] Because it is not permissible in a village or small city, where there is need of but one presbyter, to enthrone a bishop, lest the name of bishop be thus brought into disgrace, according to c. VI of Sardican. On this account in such small cities and villages and districts sparsely peopled it was the vogue to appoint a so-called chorepiscopus. So, according to c. X of Antioch, the chorepiscopus was appointed by the bishop of that city to which he was subject and to which his territory belonged. The same Canon also says that such a chorepiscopus may ordain anagnostes (readers or lectors), subdeacons, and oath-takers (i.e., catechists); but that he shall be deposed if he dare to ordain a presbyter or deacon without the consent of the bishop in the city, even though he has had the imposition of hands of a bishop. Canon VIII of the same council permits unaccused chorepiscopi to grant letters pacifical, i.e., dimissory, to those requesting them. Likewise c. XIII of Ancyra decrees that without the written authorization of a real bishop chorepiscopi have no right to ordain presbyters and deacons either in their own territory or in any other town. Canon XIV of Neocaesarea says that chorepiscopi, being in the nature of types of the seventy Apostles, officiate as assistant ministers and are honored on account of the interest they show in the poor by distributing among them the money collected in church. Moreover, c. XIV of the 7th says that it was an ancient custom for chorepiscopi to ordain anagnostes at the behest of the bishop. That is what c. LXXXIX of Basil, too, declares in his letter to chorepiscopi. These chorepiscopi, in fact, appear to be in some cases presbyters only, and in other cases to have had the imposition of hands of a bishop, as may be inferred from what is said in cc. VIII and X of Antioch. But there is a considerable difference between a bishop and a chorepiscopus. For a chorepiscopus is in charge of only one district; a bishop is the overseer of many districts. A chorepiscopus is appointed by the bishop to whom he is subject, whereas the bishop is appointed by the metropolitan. Accordingly, the chorepiscopus has to get written permission from his bishop for every ordination that he performs, whereas the latter executes each ordination on his own venture. So that the so-called chorepiscopi of today (i.e., as the term is now used in Greece), as not having these functions, possess a mere name, destitute of actuality.

[17] John of Antioch in the collection of the Canons, instead of the expression “confessed their sins to them,” substitutes the words “confessed the sins they had committed,” which is more correct.

[18] 1 We note here, however, a catholic and general axiom that all who have been ordained contrary to the Canons and unworthily, are nevertheless true priests until they are deposed by a council. Because, as divine Chrysostom says, “God does

not ordain all men, but He does act through all men, even though they themselves are unworthy, in order that the people may be saved” (Homily 2 on 2 Tim., p. 337 of Vol. IV). And again: “Because grace operates through the unworthy not on their account, but for the sake of those who are destined to be benefited” (Discourse 11 on 1 Thess., p. 216 of Vol. IV). And again: “But now, it must be said, God is wont to operate also through unworthy persons, and the grace of baptism is in no respect injuriously affected by the life of the priest” (Discourse 8 on 1 Cor., p. 290 of vol. iii). Moreover, in Discourse 3 on the Ep. to the Col., p. 107 of vol. iii, he proves this by means of numerous arguments, among which he says these things too: “God’s grace is also operative in an unworthy person, not for our sake, but for your sake.” And again: “It is not me that you are treating scornfully, but the holy orders. If you see these naked, then treat them scornfully; then not even I will tolerate any imposition. But as long as we are sitting on this throne, as long as we have the presidency, we possess the dignity and the power, even though we really are unworthy.” Symeon of Thessalonica (Reply 13) says: “in regard to ordination grace operates in them, whether they are prelates or priests, for the salvation of those coming to church; and all the mysteries they celebrate are in very truth mysteries. Woe, however, (says the same Symeon *ibidem*) “to such men, who, whether they sinned before the ordination or after the ordination, are unworthy of holy orders. And if they want to repent and to be saved, let them refrain altogether from the most holy works of holy orders, because there is nothing else that can help them to repent, if they fail to abstain beforehand from holy orders.” See also the testimony of Chrysostom concerning resignation, in the Form of Canonical Resignation, at the end of this handbook.

[19] Impious Licinius, who was brother-in-law to Constantia the sister of Constantine the Great, and enjoyed second place in the royal honor after Constantine himself, but later conceived an envy against the brother of the latter’s wife, and launched a fierce war upon God. Hence he first of all drove every Christian out of his house; afterwards he commanded that all Christian soldiers in every city in the realm should be deprived of the honor of their military office unless they sacrificed to the idols (Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.*, Book X, ch. 8; and concerning the life of Constantine, Book I, ch. 54). But after he was gone, most pious Constantine made a contrary law to the effect that all former Christians who had been in military service and had been persecuted on account of their faith in Christ by Licinius and had been deprived of the honor, should be given the choice of remaining imperial soldiers, just as they had been formerly, or, if they did not care for the honor, of being allowed each his freedom. (Eusebius, concerning the life of Constantine, Book II, ch. 33; and Sozomen, *Eccl. Hist.* I, ch. 1).

[20] Concerning Audients (or “listeners”), Succumbents (or “kneelers”), and Consistents (or “costanders”), see c. LXXV of Basil.

[21] The present-day custom of the Church treats faith-deniers for the most part considerately, in accordance with the formulation of Methodius of Constantinople. On this basis, if anyone was made a captive when a child, and as a result of fear or ignorance he denied the faith, when once he has returned thereto, after listening to the usual propitiatory prayers for seven days, on the eighth day he is bathed, and is anointed with Holy Chrism, and thus he partakes of communion, remaining thereafter in the church for eight days, and listening every day to the sacred liturgies and services. But if he was an adult and denied the faith after being tortured, in this case he is obliged to fast first for a period of twice forty days, abstaining from meat, and cheese, and eggs, and on three days in the week (namely, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday) abstaining from oil and wine. (Notice that the fast of Wednesday and Friday which is obligatory on all Christians was given to this person as a canon by way of philanthropy and clemency). For seven days he listens to the same prayers, and thus he too is bathed, like the one above, and is anointed, and communes. If, on the other hand, he willingly went and denied the faith, he too has to fast for two years in identically the same manner as the one above fasted, and, according to his ability, he must make one hundred or two hundred genuflexions thereafter he also listens to the propitiatory prayers, and is bathed, and receives the other treatments, like the ones above. (Blastaris, in his synopsis of the Canons of the Faster; and Armenopoulos, Section 5, Heading 4, of his *Epitome of the Canons*. See also this formulation in the *Euchologium*, where these prayers are to be found, more in *extenso*.)

[22] In some such manner as this a confessor (or spiritual father) ought to shed tears and mourn over the sins of Christians who confess to him; not, however, when they are confessing to him, but after their confession, when he has to advise them, because these tears of his show that he loves sinners as a father loves his children, and is sorry for them as Jacob lamented Joseph, and as Moses as well as Jeremiah lamented for the Israelites, and just as the Lord shed tears over Jerusalem. Notice also in the discourse of Gregory of Nyssa concerning repentance how *stijpnigly* therein he urges spiritual fathers to mourn for sinners.

[23] Hence divine Chrysostom (in his Discourse 2 concerning holy orders) says: “A pastor ought not to inflict penalties or penances proportionately to the sins, but ought to take into consideration also the will of the sinners, lest in trying to mend a tear or torn place he tear it worse than ever, and in making hasty attempt to help the fallen one to his feet he hurl him still

farther down. For those who have a weak will . . . . If they are penanced a little at a time, they can free themselves, if not entirely, at any rate to some extent, from their sins and passions. But if one overwhelm them suddenly with all the penances they deserve, he will deprive them of even that small amount of correction which they ought to receive . . . ." And again: So for this reason a pastor ought to possess a great deal of discretion, and countless eyes, in order to see the habitude of the soul from all sides. For just as some men, being unable to endure an austere canon, become stiff-necked and, leaping away, fall into despondency, so too, in a contrary fashion again there are some who as a result of their not receiving a canon along with their sins become careless, and grow worse, and are egged on to sin more than ever. On this account, too, in the time of Patriarch Luke one Bishop who had penanced (or, as the original says, "canonized") a soldier in too short a time, because of his having committed a willful murder, and who had given him a written document attesting the remission of his sin, was called to account by the Synod for the excessively lenient concession he had made. The Bishop, on his part, offered in witness the present Canon of this Council. He was told, however, by the Synod that though permission was given, true enough, to prelates to augment or to reduce the penances prescribed by the Canons, yet they are not permitted to employ an excessive and inconsiderate concession. Hence the Synod inflicted the penances of the Canon on the murderer, on the one hand, and chastised the Bishop, on the other hand, with suspension from his prelacy for the prescribed length of time.

[24] Note that in the present Canon there are observed those two points which Basil the Great mentions in his c. III, to wit, custom and form, and strictness and extremity. The custom and the form, which is the three years of "listening," and the ten years of succumbency (or "kneeling"). The strictness and the extremity, which is the tears, and the patience endurance of hardships, the doing of charitable deeds to others, and, in general, genuine and true repentance. Accordingly, to those who tolerated the strictness, there was made the concession of exemption from the obligation of keeping the requirement of three years' succumbency. But to those who would not tolerate this penance, no concession was made at all; on the contrary, they were ordered to keep all the years. For this reason divine Chrysostom, in his Homily 14 on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, says: "I am not asking for a multitude of years, but for correction of the soul. So show me this, whether the sinners have been contrite, whether they have changed their manner of living, and everything is finished. But as long as this is not so, no benefit will accrue from protraction of the period of penance. For even in the matter of bodily wounds, we are not concerned about how many times the wound has been bandaged, but whether the bandage has been of any benefit. So if there has been benefit in a short time, let it be no longer bandaged. But if it has been of no benefit, let it be bandaged for a longer time, even for more than ten years, until the wounded one has derived some benefit from the bandage." And again in the same Homily he says that it is not the multitude of time that suffices to characterize true repentance, but rather the change of the sinner's mind. For (according to the same saint, in the preamble of his commentary on the Gospel according to St. John) it is possible, if one repent in a single moment of time, and change his manner of living, for one to avail himself of God's philanthropy and mercy. St. Gregory the Theologian, on the other hand, in his Discourse on the Lights, says that "we ought not to accept those who neither repent nor humble themselves, whereas we ought to accept those who fail to repent as they should, and who fail to display repentance equal to the wrong they did, and that we ought to sentence them to keep the forms of repentance that befit their sins. As for those, finally, who truly repent to such an extent that they actually wither as a result of their tears, we ought to admit them to communion. From these statements it will become easy to find the solution to the bewildering question why some Canons penance an adulterer, a person guilty of bestiality, a sodomite, a sorcerer and wizard, and others, with a greater number of years, while other Canons prescribe a smaller number of years for the same offenses. The reason is that the repentance of such sinners is not judged by the number of years, but by the disposition of the soul, and according to their greater or lesser degree of repentance, the number of years of penance is prescribed as more or less." Hence John the Faster judges by the fasting and genuflections and other hardships which the penitent has consented to do in determining how much to reduce the number of years of penance the penitent deserves.

[25] In other codices it is found written thus: "of the perfect last and most necessary," etc.

[26] Dionysius of Alexandria also writes to Favius in his correspondence that "a faithful old man named Serapion, who was sacrificing to idols, and fell gravely ill and for three days was dumb, after recovering a little on the fourth day, called his nephew and told him to fetch a priest. The boy went to the presbyter. It was night-time. But the priest happened to be ill, so that he could not go. Since, however, I (sc. Dionysius) had given orders to the priests to allow persons at the point of death to commune, especially if they beggingly asked to do so, in order that they might die and depart the present life with a good hope, the priest gave the boy a portion of the all-holy bread and told him to wet it and pour it into the mouth of the old man; and after the boy did this the old man, having swallowed a little, immediately gave up his spirit" (Eusebius, Eccl. Hist., Book VI, ch. 44). Elias, too, the Metropolitan of Crete, in writing to some monk by the name of Dionysius, says that if a person is still breathing a little, and is not entirely dead, though he is senseless, and can neither take nor eat anything, or in another way spits out that which is placed in his mouth; if, I say, the person is such a one, the priest ought with a prayer to seal his lips and his tongue with the contact and affusion of the Mysteries (p. 337 of the *Juris Graecoromani*).

[27] Though it is said that Dionysius of Alexandria (as found in a comment on the present Canon) in his letter on a Canon, in speaking of those who lapsed in the midst of the persecution and asked to participate in the mysteries of communion while dying, he says that if a priest absolves from their sins and they are permitted to partake of the divine mysteries, and are consigned to that life absolved and free, this is a veritable imitation of godlike philanthropy and benevolence in that by virtue of such pardon and communion they are led to believe that they are going to receive a mitigation and alleviation of their future punishment. If, on the other hand, such persons should live, says he, thereafter, they must be bound again (i.e., their absolution must be revoked), and they who had formerly been pardoned, and become partakers of divine grace, and had been sent off to the Lord absolved and free, must again be made liable for their sins, without having done anything wrong since they communed. This, I say, appears to me to be inconsistent, and most unreasonable. If, I say, sacred Dionysius does say these things, it would nevertheless appear that the opinion of this Ecumenical Council is preferable to the opinion of an individual Father. Wherefore wise Photius declared quite aptly that decisions of ecumenical and common councils ought to be respected by all men, while the private declarations of any one Father or decrees of a local synod or regional council (that have not been confirmed by an ecumenical council, that is to say) leave one respecting them characterizable as superstitious, and yet, on the other hand, if one fails to accept them, it is dangerous to ignore them. For let it be granted, in accordance with the opinion of sacred Dionysius, that such persons commune as a matter of necessity, they ought not to be rebound on account of the pardon they had previously received. But, first of all, that pardon and communion was not legal and canonical, but necessitous. Secondly, no one can persuade others not to be scandalized when they see persons that are unworthy and have produced no fruit of repentance being allowed to partake of the divine Mysteries. After taking these views into consideration, the Council decreed that such persons should return again to the prior forms of repentance. For, moreover, even divine Dionysius himself, as if presumably correcting himself, adds: "If, however, any one of such Christ-deniers appear after the recovery of his health to need further conversion and repentance, we advise him to humble and inflict severe hardships upon himself, either for his own interest or in order to prevent other men from blaming him and becoming scandalized at his conduct. Accordingly, if he be persuaded to do this, he will be benefited; but if he be not persuaded, this refusal to be persuaded will become an indictment to him entailing his excommunication from the Mysteries and the faithful a second time." But perhaps this opinion is not that of Dionysius of Alexandria, but one of Dionysius of Corinth. I surmise this because this diction is like the diction used by this Dionysius in comments on Job.

[28] John of Antioch in the collection of the Canons has it "As concerning lapsed catechumens."

[29] Concerning catechumens Dionysius the sacred martyr says, in chapter 3 of his Hist. Hierar.: "The lowest rank is assigned to catechumens; they are destitute of any share in and are wholly uninitiated in every sacerdotal mystery."

[30] In the Collection of Canons by John of Antioch is found also the additional inclusion "or Deacon," as is mentioned in the Canon itself further above.

[31] Clergymen are called "canonics" and said to be "covered by the Canon," with an implication that their life and their mind and their discourse are all governed and directed in accordance with the sacred Canons, including under this designation Apostolical, Conciliar, and Patristic Canons (see also Footnote 1 to Ap. c. II). In addition the name "canonic" is also given to monks, as may be seen in many of the Canons themselves, and most especially to nuns, on the same assumption are named canonic, that is to say, that laymen and laywomen live for the most part according to laws of their own, or, otherwise speaking, uncanonically, and conduct themselves publicly and privately in an indifferent manner (i.e., without particular pains to obey the Canons).

[32] This percentage charge is mentioned also by divine Chrysostom, in his 56th homily on the Gospel of St. Matthew, saying that one (i.e., a debtor as a human being) gives barely a percentage, whereas the other (sc. God) grants a hundredfold and life everlasting.

[33] That is why Symeon of Thessalonica says: "Deacons must not offer portions; all Deacons (must receive theirs) through the Presbyters." And again: "Since they (sc. deacons) have not the gracious gift of formally offering to God (the sacrifice). For they are deacons solely in virtue of their having a ministerial dignity. If, then, at any rate they are not permitted to put on sacerdotal vestments without the blessing of a prelate, or of a priest, nor to commence any ceremony without a presbyter, how can they have any right to administer communion through themselves?" Divine Epiphanius, too, says the same thing in his Haer. 79: "For it is to be noted that neither have deacons been entrusted with the performance of any mystery in the ecclesiastical order, but only with acts of assistance as servants in the celebration thereof." The Apostolical Injunctions, too,

in Book VIII, ch. 46, say "Neither is it licit for a Deacon to offer sacrifice, or to baptize anyone, or to pronounce any blessing whether small or great."

[34] "For this reason, then, the written order of Emperor Alexius Comnenus ought to be annulled which decrees that in gatherings outside the Council and Synod the Chartophylax of the Great Church is to take his seat ahead of not only the priests but even of the prelates themselves, in spite of the fact that he is nothing more than a deacon, without having any other excuse to disregard these Conciliar Canons than the mere fact that it had prevailed as a custom for a long time: since this excuse is not reasonable. For Canons ought to have rather the superiority of authority wherever custom comes into conflict with Canons. For in spite of the fact that custom does have effect as an unwritten law even in civil matters, and long custom is recognized as having validity in lieu of a law, yet this is not the case in general, but only in regard to those matters respecting which there is no written law and in regard to those matters with respect to which it does not conflict with a written law, or a Canon: and this is so even according to Balsamon himself, who lends his sanction to the absurd decree of the emperor (for he was a chartophylax). Also, according to the fourth decree of the third title of the first book of ordinances, which is Book II of the Basilica, Title I, ch. 41, even the sixth Novel of Leo the Wise ordains that an unwritten custom ought not to have any validity if it is overruled by the Canons. Read also the Footnote to Ap. c. XXIX, and that to c. I of Sardica. How greatly that imperial order of this sort actually disturbed the prelates of that time on account of its absurd character can be learned by anyone who will take the trouble to read the text of the order itself which can be found in Balsamon's comment on the present Canon.

[35] Paul, hailing from Samosata, a city situated in Mesopotamia near the Euphrates River, and on this account called Paul of Samosata (and not because he served as Bishop of Samosata, as Balsamon, or even others, has said), was a son of a Manichean woman named Callinica, according to Cedrenus, Blastaris, and Balsamon, and was also made Bishop of Antioch after the death of Demetrianus, the previous Bishop of Antioch, in A.D. 260; according to Eusebius (Eccl. History, Book VII, ch. 27) he believed wrongly not only in connection with the mystery of theology in that he declared that there was but one God, not because the Father is the source of divinity, but by denying the hypostasis of the Son and of the Spirit, like Sabellius, and taking God to be but one person together with His Logos, in the same manner as a human being is one with his own logos (i.e., reason), and believing nothing more than the Jews, according to divine Epiphanius (Haer. 65), but also even waxed blasphemous in connection with the incarnate economy; according to Theodoret (Conversation II), Artemon, and Theodosius, both Sabellius and Marcellus, Photinus, and Paul of Samosata, all declare Christ to have been only a mere human being, and they all deny the divinity which had been existing in Him ever since before all the ages. In A.D. 272 the regional Council held in Antioch deposed him and anathematized him. Whereof even the Conciliar letter is to be found in Eusebius *ibidem*, which even states that Paul used to assert that the Son of God had not come down out of heaven, but, on the contrary, that he had commenced from below out of Mary. Note, furthermore, that Cedrenus, Blastaris, and Balsamon say that the Manicheans had their names changed by this same Paul to Paulicians, who sprang up a few years after Paul. See also the prolegomena of Dionysius of Alexandria. See also page 155 of the dogmatic Panoply, wherein it is written that the Paulicians are descended from the Manichees, being called Paulicians barbarically instead of Paulojohns.

[36] Indictment is one thing and reprehension is another (says divine Chrysostom in his Second Discourse on the Book of Job). An indictment (charge or accusation) is suffered in the case of grave offenses; a reprehension (reproach or censure) is incurred in the case of light trespasses. Whoever is not liable to either of these two treatments is called unindictable. For a person that cannot be indicted as an adulterer, or as a murderer, or the like, is unindictable. A person, on the other hand, that can be reprehended as an insulter, or calumniator, or vituperator, or drunkard, or the like, though exempt from indictments, is liable, nevertheless, to reprehension. On this account Job is called irreprehensible because he was far from being guilty of even the slightest offenses. That is why God said to Abraham "Be thou complaisant towards me, and become irreprehensible" (Gen. 17:1). The Apostle, wishing to appoint shepherds of the inhabited earth, since the good things of virtue were then rare, says to Titus: Appoint Bishops, as I have ordered thee, if there be anybody that is unindictable (Titus 1:7). The word irreprehensible (or blameless) would not have been applicable at that time. . . . Irreprehensibility was too comprehensive a term. The middle ground was that reflected in the term unindictable. Even a small good can be great in evils . . . not because He laid this down as a law, but because He condescended to allow delusion. For He knew that when piety blossomed, the very nature of the fact of the matter would of its own accord prefer what is good, and that there would result a selection of those things which are superior and better. Note also that according to the assertion of Chrysostom this Canon demands that those who are about to be admitted to holy orders should be not only unindictable but also irreprehensible; since piety blossomed after St. Paul, although even during the time of St. Paul the term irreprehensible was of limited applicability. For St. Paul himself wrote to Titus as well as to Timothy, saying: "A bishop, then, must be irreproachable" (1 Tim. 3:2). This word irreproachable is almost entirely indistinguishable from the word irreprehensible, which word Chrysostom himself interprets by asserting that in saying " irreproachable" St. Paul was alluding to every virtue



. . . so that if anyone's conscience upbraids him for having committed some sins, he is not doing right if he desires a bishopric and holy orders, of which by his own deeds he has made himself unworthy. Even the present Canon, too, demands irreproachability of priests, and so does c. IX of the same Council. But if it demands this of priests in general, how much more must it demand of prelates?

[37] Note that a Deaconess, though apparently ordained later by a Presbyter and Deacon, according to c. XIV of the 6th, and authorized to officiate in the liturgy, according to c. XV of the 4th, yet according to the Apostolical Injunctions she does not appear to carry out the male deacon's service in the liturgy of the divine Mysteries in the Bema, but only that service which is performed outside the Bema. For these Injunctions say, in Book III, ch. 9, in connection herewith: "Though we have not allowed women to teach in church (because St. Paul expressly says, in his First Epistle to Timothy, ch. 2, v. 12: "I suffer not a woman to teach"), how can anyone permit them to serve as priestesses? For this reason it is a mistake of the godlessness of Greeks to ordain priestesses to their female goddesses and not of the legislation of Christ. So this deaconess was ordained at first (ibid. ch. 15 and 16) for the sake of women being illuminated, i.e., being baptized, whom, after the Bishop anointed their head with holy oil, and the deacon only their forehead, she took charge of and anointed their whole body, owing to the fact that it was not proper for a woman's naked body to be seen by men. Secondly, for the other services to women. For in those homes where women were dwelling together with unbelieving men, to which it was not perfectly decent for male deacons to be sent, on account of the risk of evil suspicions, a woman deaconess was sent, according to the 15th ch. of the 3rd book (of the Injunctions), to watch at the doors of the church lest any uncatechized and unfaithful woman might enter (Book II, ch. 17); and she examined those women who went from one city to another with letters commendatory as to whether they really were Orthodox Christian women; as to whether they were tainted by any heresy; as to whether they were married or were widows: and after the examination she would provide a place in the church for each one of them to stand according to her luck and attitude (Book III, ch. 14 and 19). But a deaconess was also needed to render services to those widows who were listed in the church roll, by offering them the alms donated by Christians; and they were useful also in connection with other services too. But most of all, according to chapters 20 and 28 of the eighth book (of the Injunctions) she was ordained for the purpose of guarding the holy gates and serving the presbyters when they were baptizing women with a view to decency and propriety, wherein it is written that "A Deaconess can neither bless nor do anything that presbyters and deacons do." In addition Epiphanius (Haer. 9) says concerning them that the ecclesiastical order needed womankind only by way of deaconesses, whom it called widows, and the older ones among whom it called presbytidas. Nevertheless it did not command anywhere for presbyteresses or priestesses to be made such. For neither did deacons in the ecclesiastical order receive any authority to perform any mystery, but only to serve as assistant in connection with the rites being performed by the priests. And again, it is said that the battalion of deaconesses is in the Church, not to serve in the capacity of priests, nor to undertake to pardon anything, but for the sake of preserving the decency of the female sex, either in connection with rite of baptism, say, or in connection with the function of visiting the sick or those in distress, or, in time of necessity of denuding a woman's body, in order that it may be beheld only by her, and not by the male dignitaries officiating in the process of performing the sacred offices. Though it is true that Balsamon says, in reply to Question 35 of Marcus of Alexandria, that Deaconesses enjoyed a rank in the Bema (or Sanctuary), but that the complications due to menstruation dispossessed them of their rank and removed their service from the Bema, yet he himself again in the same reply says that in Constantinople deaconesses are ordained who have no share or privilege in the Bema, but who perform many ecclesiastical services and help to correct women ecclesiastically. Clement of Alexandria, surnamed Stromateus, in his Book III, says that the Apostles had women with them as sisters and fellow deaconesses in the matter of preaching for women confined to the house, through whom the Lord's teaching penetrated into the chamber and private apartment of women. It is also found stated in some books that the appointment (or quasi ordination) of a deaconess consisted in her bowing her head while the prelate laid his hand upon her, and in his making the sign of the cross three times, and repeating some prayers over her. Concerning deaconesses St. Paul writes in his First Epistle to Timothy: "Even so must their wives be modest, not calumniators, sober, faithful in all things" (1 Tim. 3:11). Note that although deaconesses were not the same as widows, nor the same as presbytides, yet, in spite of this fact, it is true that deaconesses were recruited and ordained from the battalion of widows enrolled in the church. Read also the second footnote to c. XL of the 6th, and the footnote to c. XXI of Laodicea. If anyone fond of learning things would like to know the particular way in which such deaconesses were ordained, he may learn this more in detail from Blastaris. For the latter states that in old books it was found written that the women in question were forty years old when they were ordained, and that they wore a full monachical habit (which means that of the great habit), and that they were covered with a maphorion, having its extremities hanging down in front. That when the prelate recited over them the words "The Divine Grace," they did not bend their knee like the deacons, but only bowed their head. Afterwards the prelate would place on their neck underneath the maphorion a deacon's stole (or scarf), bringing the two extremities of the stole together in front. He would not permit them, however, to serve in the Mysteries, or to hold a fan, like the deacons, but only to commune after the deacons, and, after the prelate communed the others, they could take the cup from his hands and replace it upon the holy table, without communing

anyone. Blastaris, however, adds of his own accord that they were later forbidden by the Fathers to enter the Bema or to perform any such services, on account of dire results of menstruation, as Balsamon stated further above.